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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND CHURCH

DURING

THE THREE FIRST CENTURIES.

BY

DR. AUGUSTUS NEANDER.

110771

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,

BY HENRY JOHN ROSE, B.D.

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AND LATE FELLOW OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING

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THE

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THE history of the Christian Church, especially in the earlier periods of its existence, is a cheering subject for the contemplation of a Christian heart. It supplies a commentary, which cannot be mistaken, on the promise of our Lord, that He would be with his disciples even to the end of the world. (Matt. xxviii. 20.) The difficulties against which Christianity had at first to struggle, only serve to prove the overwhelming might of the arm which sustained it. It was to be expected that an age of corruption should put forth all its powers to crush that religion which denounced and combated it. The progress which Christianity made in spite of this opposition, constitutes one of the chief points of interest belonging to the earlier periods of ecclesiastical history. The working of that leaven, which is destined in God's good time to leaven the whole lump, is seen most definitely at that season, when the world was exchanging its paganism for Christianity [1].

Let any man read the first sixteen chapters of Gibbon, and

[1] Every man at all acquainted with the history of religion, will see at once, that the history of this period contains much that is interesting to all ages, because the controversies of all ages have been nearly the same in substance, though varied in form, and in this period the germ of most of them will be discerned.

then turn from that melancholy record of blood and crime to the history of the Christian Church during the same period. He will then acknowledge that there was beneath that stormy tide of passion and ambition an under current silently advancing, whose calmer and purer waters came to light, when once that troubled tide had passed away. He will see principles of action, and rules of life, the strongest and the purest ever given to man, making their way against all the persecutions of power, by their own intrinsic worth, and by the power which sustained them from above. It is in this point of view, among many others, that the early history of Christianity is fraught with such deep interest to man, and it is to be considered one of the great aims of such an history to develop this progress of the Church clearly, and delineate it with accuracy.

It would be foreign to the purpose of this Preface to discuss the merits or the demerits of other ecclesiastical histories, but it may be allowable to direct attention to this particular point, as connected with the work of Dr. Neander. To develope this progress of Christianity faithfully, requires that the historian should not only possess the learning and the impartiality which are needed for all historical inquiries; but that he should unite profound and extensive views of human nature with what is of even more importance, warm feelings for the higher parts of the Christian scheme, and an eye well practised to discern the dealings of God in the world. I cannot but think that the learned and amiable author of this history unites these qualifications in no common degree; and I believe that it would be difficult to become acquainted with his works without feeling reverence for the high qualities both of head and heart which adorn their author. The present portion of the history bears testimony to his candour and acuteness, his diligence and his fidelity. His judgment also in disentangling the historical[2] from the fictitious in the Acta

[2] It has, however, been observed, that in another part of the subject, Dr. Neander has expressed far too favorable an opinion of Apollonius of Tyana—a man, whose very existence is a matter of doubt, and whose life, as set forth to us by his eulogists, is a tissue of impostures. See Leslie, Easy Method with the Deists.

Martyrum cannot fail to strike any one, who will take the trouble to compare the details of this history with the original of the Acta Martyrum, as edited by Ruinart.

To this meed of praise, high as it is, I think every impartial reader will consider the author to be entitled, but still this avowal by no means binds us to the acceptance of all the views propounded in this work. I feel it necessary to state, that in many of them I cannot at all concur. The author has embraced them honestly, and he maintains them with a zealous love of truth, and in a truly Christian temper of charity; but still I cannot accede to the views themselves, nor acknowledge the weight of the arguments brought to support them, especially those which relate to the early form of church government, and the questions concerning the Christian ministry. It will be seen at once that these are not isolated questions; they are only parts of a larger system or view, which seeks to place Christianity in an improper opposition to Judaism in respect to universality and spirituality. The same sort of view which induces the author to attribute the rights of Christian priesthood to every Christian, and to maintain that these rights gradually became restricted to one class from motives of convenience, and the necessity of order, &c., leads him to look upon all days as *Lord's days*, and to consider the special sanctification of one day in the week a measure of convenience, rather than a precept of Christianity. The view taken of the sacraments, and some other portions of the Christian scheme, is greatly affected by this desire to represent the essentials of Christianity, as independent upon any particular and external observances. In a great degree, the views taken of these matters by the author appear to arise from habits of mind which are admirable in themselves, but still require regulation, to prevent them from undue excess or improper application. I mean his fear of lowering the spiritual nature of Christianity, by giving too much importance to its forms —his fear, lest the spirit should be lost in the form. This is a rational fear, and a just ground of jealousy, but the question is,

whether it is justly applied. And in the present instance, I think it has improperly led Dr. Neander to combat the notion of an authoritative ministry, as if it savoured of the Jewish priesthood, and to present in great vagueness much which Christianity distinctly defines [3].

Now one thing which is remarkably striking in the view pre-

[3] I here subjoin an extract from the "British Critic," enumerating some of the writers who treat on the question of the ministry:

"To those who are not conversant with this question we should recommend Bennet's Rights of the Clergy (Lond. 1711). This book proves, we think, decisively, the necessity of an ordination by ministers, although it does not enter into the question between presbyters and bishops. This latter question he treated in his work on Schism, and it is also well argued by King Charles, in the letters which passed between him and the ministers at Newport. The Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici, also argues the former question admirably. Leslie's little tract (on the Qualifications requisite to administer the Sacraments), and Bilson's large treatise, are also well worthy of perusal. The former of these contains the pith of the episcopal question in a small compass. Slatyer's 'Original Draught of the Primitive Church,' is said* to have made a convert of Lord King, against whose work on the Church it was written. Burscough, Thorndike, or Potter, might also serve the same purpose as the above works, or Daubeny's 'Guide to the Church.' Any of these books, but especially Bennet, Leslie, or Burscough, will give the common arguments on the subject." On the question of the priesthood, as savouring of Judaism, see Hooker, Eccles. Pol. Book iii. § 11. v. 78. There are also some admirable remarks on this subject in an article on Dr. Whateley's Errors of Romanism, in the British Critic for July, 1831.

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* As this assertion has been controverted, it may be proper to state, that I wrote the article which is here quoted, and at the same time to give the authority on which the assertion was made. It is the following passage from the Works of the Learned for 1739, and it will be seen that the words of the Review do not assert the fact, but simply that there exists a report to that effect—"*is said* to have made a convert of Lord King, &c."

After praising Sir P[eter] K[ing] as a lawyer, and mentioning his treatise on the Church, the writer proceeds:—"An answer was made by a very learned and judicious divine to this Book in 1717, which Sir P[eter King] saw, and read in MS. before it was printed; and he had it in his power to prevent the printing of it effectually, if he pleased. But so far was he from that, that he gave up his own book, which had just then had a second edition, without asking his consent, by one Bell, a dissenting bookseller, thereunto moved by the party; and he returned the MS. with thanks, and desired it might be printed, for it had convinced him of his mistakes." Works of the Learned for Jan. 1739. Vol. v. p. 21.

sented by Dr. Neander of the early government of the Church, is its indefiniteness in point of time. In the first chapter he professes to treat of the apostolic times, but in that case the miraculous gifts and the superintendence of the apostles themselves would appear to deserve more particular notice. They are two elements which distinguish this period from every other. If however it be meant for the age immediately succeeding that of the apostles, it must be remarked that the notices of this age are very scanty, and as far as I have investigated the question, his account, which admits of lay elders and rejects an authoritative ministry, is not warranted by those notices, and still less by the accounts of the next times, of which we have a more accurate knowledge. To descend, therefore, to one or two particulars:—

1. With regard to lay elders (see 1 Tim. v. 17, quoted p. 190). The passage from Bishop Bilson, which I have cited, is very badly worded, but as it was impossible to extract his commentary on it, I merely took the shortest extract possible. In his work, p. 131, the reader will find strong arguments for an interpretation, at least somewhat similar in substance, though differently expressed. The most obvious interpretation certainly appears that given by Dr. Neander, but still I am inclined to think it not the true one. Mosheim says, that he acquiesces in it, but he gives and supports in his note an entirely different interpretation. He makes "labouring in the word," to mean extending Christianity among heathens by labouring to convert them, and distinguishes this "labour" from that of teaching the converted Church: (Mosheim, de Rebus Christianorum, p. 126.) He also admits that this one passage is not sufficient to establish the existence of lay elders, that they had ceased almost immediately, and that afterwards none were made presbyters but such as could also teach the Church.

2. With regard to the gifts or χαρισματα of Christians (see p. 188).

The word χαρισμα is used sixteen times in Scripture, and variously applied.—If any one will take the trouble to look at

Rom. xii. 6—8, he will find it there applied to (1.) prophecy; (2.) ministry, (διακονια); (3.) teaching; (4.) exhortation; (5.) charity; (6.) government; (7.) showing mercy.

It has been contended from 1 Pet. iv. 9—11, that all gifted brethren should be ministers of the word, and preach publicly in the churches. Now I can see in this passage only a general exhortation to use all the gifts which God bestows upon us, for the edification of our brethren; and in the interpretation of ver. 11, Macknight renders it, "If any man speak *by inspiration*, let him speak as the oracles of God." It is to be remembered that, during this time, the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were manifested by miraculous effects; and, therefore, great caution is requisite in applying what is said of those times to our own. The presbyters were the public ministers in the assemblies, the public expounders of the word of God, they were from the first appointed by imposition of hands, and it was a regular office. Now in order to make out the argument of our opponents, it ought to be shown that *any ordinary gift*, or a capacity for teaching properly, entitled a man to be a public teacher, and take the place of the presbyters without qualifying himself for that office in the regular course, to which other presbyters submitted; namely, ordination. I am unable to discover such a general permission even in the apostolic age, and I cannot but think that establishing a regular ministry with the right hand to be contended with, perhaps, or superseded by another irregular ministry from the left hand, is unlike the dealings of God and his apostles. That these gifted brethren might be of great service to the cause of Christ by activity in their own proper sphere—by instructing those whom they could instruct, no one is weak enough to deny; but this is not the point contended for. It would seem from Dr. Neander's account, that by degrees all public teaching was limited to the presbyters, which was not the case at first. We look then to the apostolic age, and we certainly find some brethren miraculously gifted, using their gifts publicly for the good of Christ's Church, though not regular ministers; but as

soon as the Church of Christ emerges from the darkness which hangs around the immediate post-apostolic age, we find every thing pretty well settled, and a regular ministry established [4].

The episcopal question is hardly touched upon, for the points which are concerned in it, would require separate discussions of considerable length to be fairly considered. One or two works, besides the great works of Hooker and Taylor, in which it has been argued on the episcopal side, are mentioned in a note [5]. The main point is simply this, whether presbyters had originally the right of ordination. The limits of episcopal power over the clergy is a different question, and the part of Dr. Neander which relates to this, will, I think, be read with considerable interest. Those who would wish to see the controversies in which Cyprian was engaged, handled by a person whose notions on this subject are entirely opposed to those of Dr. Neander, may consult the work entitled, Historical Collections concerning District Succession during the three first centuries. It was written, I believe, by one of the Nonjurors.

These remarks it seemed proper to make on the important subject of the Christian Ministry, and in making them I trust that I shall not be deemed guilty of presumption, but simply desirous of pointing out what I believe to be true and salutary in the author's work, and what I consider erroneous. It will not be desirable to enter into the discussion of the other points at the same length. After the general indication I have made above of their unsoundness, as it appears to me, I must leave the work to the judgment of the reader. The Christian tone of feeling which

[4] In making these remarks, I have studiously preferred drawing them from writers, who do not agree with the Church of England, among them are Macknight, Collinge, (Vindiciæ Ministerii Evangelici Revindicatæ, p. 45—56.) M. Poole's Quo Warranto, (chapter entitled, Gifted Brethren no Gospel Preachers.) These two last treatises are nearly contemporary with Calamy's "Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici," published by the Provincial Assembly, 1654.

[5] Churchman's History of Episcopacy; Slatyer, (or Sclater, for the work is anonymous) Original Draught of the Primitive Church; Maurice's Diocesan Episcopacy: Brokesby's History of the Government of the Church during the three first centuries. See also, my brother's "Sermons on the Commission of the Clergy."

characterizes it, and the beautiful development of the progress of Christianity against persecution, and of its effects upon the social life of the world, cannot fail to obtain their due share of approbation, and need no praise of mine.

But it may, perhaps, be useful, if I add here a very brief synopsis of the contents of the work, so as to show the plan upon which Dr. Neander has worked in this portion of his history, and thus to methodize it more conveniently than the detailed table of contents affords us the means of doing. This is the course pursued in the history:—

INTRODUCTION.

1. General view of the heathen and Jewish world in a religious point of view.

Section I.—EXTERNAL HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. Its propagation during the three first centuries.
2. The opposition which it met with from heathen persecution.
3. The opposition to it by controversial writings.

Section II.—HISTORY OF THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH—CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND CHURCH SCHISM.

1. General view of the early constitution of the Church and its changes, until it assumed a form of outward unity as one integral body.
2. Church Discipline—Excommunication and re-admission to the Church.
3. History of Schisms (as distinguished from Heresies).
   a. Schism of Felicissimus in the North African Church.
   b. Schism of Novatian in the Romish Church.

Section III.—CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORSHIP.

1. Christian Life—Effects of Christianity as affecting social and domestic life, and condition of the world generally.
2. Christian Worship:

   Places and times of worship—Single acts of worship—

Sacraments—Baptism and the Lord's Supper, considered as acts of worship, not doctrinally viewed.

Section IV.—History of the conception and Development of Christianity as a system of Doctrines.

1. History of Sects.

a. The Judaizing Sects.

b. The Sects which arose from the mixture of Oriental Theosophy with Christianity.

(1.) Gnostic Sects.
General Remarks on Gnostic Sects.
Cerinthus—Basilides—Valentinus—Ophites—Pseudo-basilidians—Saturninus—Tatian—Eclectics as *e. g.* Carpocrates—Marcion—Appendix on the Worship of the Gnostics.

(2.) Manes and the Manichees.

Section V.—History of the Formation of Christianity as a system of Doctrines in the Catholic Church which formed itself in opposition to the sects.

1. (*a*) Realistic disposition.

(*b*) Idealistic disposition in the Alexandrian Church.

2. Development of the great doctrines of Christianity separately. Theology—Anthropology—Christology—Doctrine concerning the Church—Eschatology.

3. (1) History of the most celebrated Church teachers: Barnabas—Clement—Hermas.

(2) Peculiar characteristics of the Church teachers.
α In Asia Minor.
β In North Africa.
γ In Rome.
δ In Alexandria.

I have now finished the prefatory remarks which I feel called upon to make with regard to the original work; and in concluding them, I must again express my high respect for the author's talents and learning, and for what is far above talents and learning, his Christian temper and feelings. In translating his work, I think the cause of truth requires me to express my dissent from some of his views; and I feel assured that the candid author himself would be the last person to disapprove of the course I have taken.

With regard to the manner in which I have executed my humble task of translation, it is for others to judge, not myself. I have only endeavoured to transcribe faithfully the ideas of the author, and in words approaching as much to his own as possible. In translating a work of imagination, the great point is to convey the spirit of the original: in translating the history of the Church, my object has been to say every thing which the author says, and nothing whatever which he does not say.

With regard to the second edition of this first volume, I must merely add, that it scarcely differs at all from the former, with the exception of a very few corrections, where I had either missed the sense of the original, or where I thought a slight alteration might improve the faithfulness of the version, and the clearness of the sense. I have constantly compared the proof sheets with the original, and the consequence has been the very few alterations to which I have just alluded. I ought perhaps here to apologize for the few fragments of notes which are scattered through the volume. The fact is, that I do not pretend to give any notes to the work at all, but have merely printed a few private memoranda made in the course of reading this history, because I thought them likely to be useful. In general they are merely calculated to facilitate references to other editions of the authors here quoted, besides those used by Dr. Neander. I trust that they may be found of use, inasmuch as I have often found it very difficult to consult the originals of passages, simply because the editions were different from those which I possessed.

I will only add, that as I hope, ere long, to publish a translation of the succeeding volumes of this history, I shall feel obliged by any corrections, or by any suggestions, which may render the succeeding volumes more valuable and more acceptable.

H. J. Rose.

Houghton Conquest,
1842.

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

To set forth the history of the Church of Christ, as an eloquent witness to the Divine power of Christianity, as a school of Christian experience, as a voice of instruction and warning to all who choose to hear, which speaks to all ages of the world—this has long been the chief aim of my life and of my studies. And yet at the same time I have always felt the deep importance of such a work, and the great difficulty of accomplishing it in a manner which should answer the demands of knowledge, and at the same time serve these great practical purposes. Both these ends are intimately connected; nothing, which will not prove its truth before the judgment-seat of a genuine, unprejudiced knowledge, that does not look through the false glare of a philosophical or dogmatical school, can be adapted for edification, instruction, and admonition; and wherever knowledge, occupying itself with Divine things, and their revelation and development in human nature, does not lose itself, by the mismanagement of human perverseness, in senseless caricatures, or content itself with a lifeless skeleton of facts, it must necessarily lead to these practical results.— Knowledge and life must mutually imbue each other with the spirit peculiar to each, if we would preserve the source of life from the manifold contradictions of error, and knowledge from a dead and empty vanity.

Although I felt an inward call to such an undertaking, yet I

was constantly withheld from the execution of this favourite scheme, which had so long occupied my thoughts, by the consciousness of its importance and its responsibility—especially in an age like the present, which needs so much the aid of "Historia, vitæ Magistra," to find a sure and certain guide amidst its multifarious storms. After much preparation by means of works on detached portions of ecclesiastical history[1], I was at last induced, by many outward and inward motives, to attempt the execution of a work which, if delayed too long, might, perhaps, remain for ever unaccomplished.

The most immediate inducement of an outward nature was, that my very excellent publisher urged me to undertake a new edition of my book on the Emperor Julian, and to supply what was left imperfect in it; but on attempting this, I found that, with my present views, this book would be very much altered, and that if any thing at all was done with it, I must entirely rewrite it. I then began to think that I would first publish the ecclesiastical history of the three first centuries, as the beginning of a general history of the Christian Church, and the encouragement of my publisher strengthened me in my determination.

I therefore begin the execution of this plan with the following volume, and publish the first part of an ecclesiastical history of the first three centuries, which shall be followed, "Deo volente," by the second about next Easter[2]. The History of the Apostolic

[1] Among these we may mention, I. the Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Geschichte des Christenthums und des Christlichen Lebens; Berlin, 1825. The first volume relates to the first three centuries, and serves to illustrate the first and third sections of the present work.

2. Genetische Entwickelung der Vornehmsten Gnostischen Systemen; Berlin, 1818.

3. Antignostikus Geist des Tertullian; Berlin, 1825.

4. A work on Chrysostom and his times.

5. St. Bernard and his times.

6. A Life of our Saviour.

[2] Neander's book was originally published in three volumes: this volume contains a volume and a half of the original work.

Age, as a whole, appeared to me too important to be interwoven into this historical work. I therefore altogether presuppose it already executed, while I reserve the publication of it for a separate book[1]:—May He, from whom all that is good and true descends, accompany the beginning of this work with his blessing, and grant me the power and the proper disposition to continue it.

In conclusion, I beg to offer my most heartfelt thanks to all the friends who have given me their assistance during the printing of this work, and particularly to my dear young friend, M. Singer of Silesia, one of our most promising students in theology. This book owes much to his kindness and diligence in correcting the press, which was often attended with no small trouble to him. I have also to thank this kind friend for the table of contents, which I hope will contribute much to the satisfaction of the reader.

A. Neander.

[1] [It has now been published. The second edition of it has been translated into English by Mr. Ryland, and forms two volumes of the Edinburgh Cabinet Library. H. J. R.]

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THE

HISTORY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND CHURCH,

DURING THE THREE FIRST CENTURIES.

INTRODUCTION.

General view of the State of Religion among the Romans, Greeks, and Jews, at the time of the first appearance of Christianity.

HUMAN nature bears universally the same relation to Christianity, inasmuch as that nature remains always essentially the same, as well as its tendencies to evil and to good, although in different epochs the active development of those tendencies appears under different forms. There are, no doubt, in the general history of unregenerated human nature, as there are in the life of an unregenerated individual, some periods in which its godlike qualities are most visibly displayed, and others in which its ungodliness is most prominent; and yet a deep observer, whom appearances do not deceive, may observe in every age qualities of both kinds at work, and satisfy himself of the constant identity of human nature. The most depraved times are not without some contrast of good against the prevailing evil, and on the other hand, in an age apparently the most glorious, there will always be found some offset of evil, partly in those very circumstances, which a superficial view regards as an unmixed manifestation of good, aud partly in those which are openly opposed to it. In every age Christianity proves itself the only means by which the innate evil of human nature,

which always remains the same, though it is at some times developed in open excesses, and at others in hidden wickedness, can be purified, and human nature itself, from its inmost foundations, ennobled and exalted. In every age, therefore, Christianity has the same relation to the corruption of human nature, which in it alone can find its radical cure. The declaration of Christ is universally proved true, that he came, not for the sake of the righteous, but for the sake of sinners; not for the sound, but for the sick. So, also, although the obstacles opposed to that attractive power which Christianity exerts upon human nature may be more or less; yet Christianity never entirely fails (unless when its preachers mix up too much of their own with it) to exert this attractive power of the Divine nature upon that which is akin to the divine in humanity. It is universally seen, that those come to the Son of God whom the Father draws to him; the sheep, who know the voice of their shepherd when he calls them, and follow him. The hindrances, however, which oppose this influence of Christianity on human nature in different periods appear under different forms, but they all rest on the same foundation, on the same inclinations of human nature, which are opposed to Christianity, and over which it must triumph in order to be able to fix its roots in the depths of that nature. And, again, it is constantly seen how every human affection finds its place in Christianity, a scheme which calculates upon the development of the whole nature of man, and how the opposite and conflicting powers and affections of man's nature can be reconciled to each other by Christianity alone. It is universally proved that Christianity is the leaven, destined to leaven the whole mass of human nature.

Now that which may indeed be perceived throughout the whole of ecclesiastical history, is more striking and prominent in those periods in which Christianity took a peculiar hold of human life on a larger scale, and this is particularly seen in the season at which Christianity was at first revealed in the life of man, as the means of reforming and healing his nature; for the unseen hand which guides all the threads in the development of man's nature, in the plans of his infinite wisdom, had so guided the threads of this development among that portion of the human race, in which Christianity was first to take root, and from which the instruction of the rest of mankind was to proceed, that they were exactly calculated to be brought together by the

power of Christianity, and to be interwoven together into one web. The consideration of this first period will show us how requisite a fundamental remedy for the evil of human nature then was, and how the want of it was particularly felt in those regions,—it will show us what is calculated to satisfy the moral and religious wants of human nature, and how Christianity exactly supplied this need ;—it will show us how an unconscious desire after such a religion was excited, and how the spiritual world was made exactly then most capable of receiving such a religion ; but, at the same time, how powerful obstacles of a peculiar nature also opposed the reception of Christianity in this century; and, lastly, it will show us that a religion like the Christian, could never have sprung forth from any of the individual religious tendencies of that age, nor from any union of them ; but, at the same time, how well the opposing religious tendencies of that age might be purified, ennobled, reconciled with one another, and united by means of Christianity. We shall first throw our glance on the heathen world, under the influence of the Roman and Grecian nations.

Religious state of the Roman and Grecian world, in Heathen days.

It was Christianity which first presented religion under the form of objective truth, as a system of doctrines perfectly independent of all individual conceptions of man's imagination, and calculated to meet the moral and religious wants of man's nature, and in that nature every where to find some point on which it might attach itself. The religions of antiquity, on the contrary, consist of many elements of various kinds, which, either by the skill of the first promulgator, or in the length of years, by the impress of national peculiarities, were moulded together into one whole. By the transmission of tales, half mythical, and half historical, by forms and statues bearing the impress of religious feelings or ideas, mingled with multifarious poems, which showed a powerful imaginative spirit, rugged indeed, or if animated by the spirit of beauty, at least devoid of that of holiness, all these varied materials were interwoven so completely into all the characters, customs, and relations of social life, that the religious matter could no longer be separated from the mixed mass, nor be disentangled from the individual nature of the life

and political character of each people with which it was interwoven. There was no religion generally adapted to human nature, only religions fitted to each people. The divinity appeared here, not as free and elevated above nature, not as that which, overruling nature, might form and illuminate the nature of man; but the divinity was lowered to the level of nature, and made subservient to it.

That idea, which dwells in the heart of man, of a Divine Being, was not recognised as a revelation of an Almighty and Holy God, a God above nature and of free-will, and received as a finger-mark which actually pointed to him; but this notion was transferred to all the great masses, powers, and appearances of nature, which worked on feeble man either to befriend or fright him; and, lastly, to all which appeared great in history or in the intellectual world; and often without any reference to its moral or immoral character. Through this principle of deifying the powers of nature, by which every exertion of bare power, even though immoral, might be received among the objects of religious veneration, the idea of holiness which beams forth from man's conscience, must continually have been thrown into the back-ground and overshadowed. As long as a certain simplicity of life and manners existed among a people,—as long as the political and social life was in its purity and power,—so long also might a religion, interwoven into every social relation, retain its life and vigour; and the moral feelings, awakened by civil and social intercourse, might attach themselves to that which was religious in the national religion, and ennoble it. Now this was especially the case among the Romans, while the republic was in full vigour; for among them, with all their miserable superstition, religion took rather a political and moral cast, than as among the Greeks, a character in which the refinements of art were joined with those of an æsthetic system, a character which in natural religion is likely to prove dangerous to morality[1]. The old lawgivers were well aware how closely the maintenance of an individual state religion depends on the maintenance of the individual character of the people, and their civil and domestic virtues. They were well aware that when once this union is dissolved no power can restore it again. Therefore we find, especially in Rome, where politics were the

[1] See the remarkable intimation of Dionysius of Halicarnassus concerning the difference between the Roman and the Grecian religion. Archæolog. II. 18.

ruling passion, a watchfulness after the most punctilious observance of traditional religious ceremonies, and a jealous aversion to any innovations in religion.

Men of thought, however, must always have attained to the perception, that in the traditional religions of a people, truth and falsehood must be intermingled. The consciousness of their religious nature, developed by the influence of their reason, must have taught them to distinguish the foundation of religion from the superstructure of superstition. The belief of a divine origin of all existence is a first principle in man's nature, and he is irresistibly impelled to ascend from Many to One. This very feeling showed itself even in the polytheism of national religions, under the idea of a Highest God, or a Father of the Gods.—Among those who gave themselves up to the consideration of Divine things, and to reflection upon them, this idea of an original unity must have been more clearly recognised, and must have formed the centre-point of all their inward religious life and thought. There always accompanied, therefore, the polytheism of the national religions of antiquity, a certain doctrine of the unity of God; although, in general, this doctrine was unable to elevate itself above the principles of natural religion. It usually appeared only as an accompaniment to the polytheism of the national religion, a conception of religion under a different form, and with a different spirit; the one a conception of nature from the consideration of the multitude of powers at work in her; and the other from that of the unity which revealed itself in the operation of those powers. But under all circumstances, the idea of this unity appeared something too abstract and elevated to be brought within the comprehension of the gross and sensuous many. The imagination of the people was to be engaged with the numerous powers and energies flowing forth from that one Highest Being, while to the contemplation of that unity, only a small number of exalted spirits, the initiated leaders of the multitude, (which in religious matters was accounted a minor) could elevate themselves. The one God was the God of philosophers alone. Thus Plato said, in the true spirit of the ancient world, that it is hard to find out the Father of all, and that it is impossible, when you have found him, to make him known to all; and so the Brahmins of the East Indies still think. A spiritual conception of the whole of religion was closely connected with the doctrine of the unity of God, and

both together formed an esoteric system of doctrines attached to the exoteric, symbolic religion of the people. All pure spiritual knowledge of religion was considered as the peculiar possession of a small number of initiated men; it seemed impossible to communicate this knowledge to the multitude, under which name we must include not only the lower classes, but, in general, all those who were occupied with any practical business. Certainly, the spiritual perception of religion, in order to be conceived, duly understood, and soundly employed, supposed a certain stage of intellectual cultivation, and a certain direction of the whole inward life, and of the whole habits of thinking; and no means were at hand to produce these qualifications, and thus to work on the inmost foundations, and the centre-point of human nature. Hence, the ruling opinion of all the thinking men of antiquity, from which all religious legislation proceeded, was, that pure religious truth could not be proposed to the multitude, but only such a mixture of fiction, poetry, and truth, as would serve to represent religious notions in such a manner that they might make an impression on men, whose only guide was their senses[2]. The principle of a so called *fraus pia* was prevalent in all the legislation of antiquity. The great historian Polybius, says, (B. xvi. c. 12.) "As far as it serves to maintain piety, we must pardon some historians, if they do relate miraculous stories." As this same Polybius saw in the religion which was so interwoven into all the public and private relations of the Romans, and in the superstition which was connected with it, the most eminent cause of the truth and honesty by which they were distinguished in all their intercourse with other nations, and the source of the prosperity of their state, he therefore defends the Roman legislators from the reproach, that they had introduced so much superstition among mankind, and says,—"If a state could be formed wholly of wise men, perhaps, such means would not be requisite. But as the people are giddy and full of evil desires, there remains no other resource than to keep the multitude in check by the fear of something unseen, and by terrors arising from this sort of tragic representation" (vi. 56). This observer of human nature, who saw deeply into it by means of the light of nature, and to whom the light of Divine wisdom was alone wanting, clearly perceived that the

[2] [See Warburton's Alliance, Book i. ch. iv. p. 45. in Quarto edition of his works.—H. J. R.]

earthly order of civil society cannot be maintained as an independent arrangement, and can only be maintained, when it is held together by a higher bond, connecting human affairs with heaven ; but how miserable would be the case of mankind, if this bond could only be united by means of lies : if lies were necessary in order to restrain the greater portion of mankind from evil ! And what could religion in such a case effect ? It could not impart holy dispositions to the inward heart of man ; it could only restrain the open outbreaking of evil, that existed in the heart, by the power of fear. Falsehood, which cannot be arbitrarily imposed on human nature, would never have been able to obtain this influence, had not a truth, which is sure to make itself felt by human nature, been working through it, had not the belief in an unseen God, on whom man universally feels himself dependent, and to whom he feels himself attracted, had not the impulse towards an invisible world, which is implanted in the human heart, been able to work also through this covering of superstition[3]. In this point of view, with all the appearances of political freedom in antiquity, how little could that free development of spiritual and moral powers, which human nature requires, have existence, when the greater part of mankind, given up to blind superstition, were obliged to submit to be led by lies at the hands of a few who had the monopoly of truth. And these wise men themselves, who believed that they were elevated above the multitude, who needed no such artificial terrors, who saw that mankind can only be happy by the establishment of moral order, who had pleasure after the inward man in the holy law for its own sake, could they then, if they really probed their own hearts, say that their inward feelings entirely harmonized with this holy law ; did they feel nothing within them of that power of evil, whose outbreakings among the multitude, uncontrolled by any refinements of education, they believed it necessary to restrain by the aid of a higher power ? Let us compare with the above expression of Polybius the opinions of some thinking men who lived in the century in which Christianity itself appeared.

The geographer Strabo (see B. i. c. 2. p. 36, ed. Casaubon) thinks that, in the same manner that mythical tales and fables are needful for children, so also they are necessary for the

[3] [See Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacr. Book I. c. i. § vi. vii.—H. J. R.]

uneducated and uninformed, who are in some sort children, and also for those who are half-educated, (πεπαιδευμενοι μετριως) for even with them reason is not sufficiently powerful, and they are not able to free themselves from the habits they have acquired as children (*i. e.* of loving fables, &c.). This is, indeed, a sad condition of humanity, when the seed of holiness, which can develop itself only in the whole course of a life, cannot be strewn in the heart of the child, and when mature reason must destroy that which was planted in the early years of infancy! When holy truth cannot form the foundation of the future development of life from the earliest dawn of childish consciousness! He then continues thus :—" The great mass of the inhabitants of cities are excited to good by means of agreeable fables, when they hear the poets narrating in a fabulous manner the deeds of heroes ; such for instance, as the labours of Hercules or Theseus, or the honours bestowed on men by the gods, or when they see these mythical events represented by painting or statuary ; and they are deterred from evil by narrations or pictures of the punishments inflicted by the gods ; for the great mass of women, and the promiscuous multitude of the people cannot be led to piety by philosophical reasoning, but for that purpose superstition is requisite, which cannot be supported without miraculous stories and prodigies[1]." The thinking Roman statesmen also of the time at which Christianity appeared, as Varro, for instance, distinguish between the *theologia philosophica* and the *theologia civilis*, which contradicts the principles of the former, as Cotta in Cicero distinguished between the belief of Cotta, and the belief of the Pontifex. The philosopher required in religion a persuasion grounded on reasoning, the citizen, the statesman followed the tradition of his ancestors without inquiry. Suppose now this *theologia civilis*, and this *theologia philosophica* to proceed together, without a man's wishing to set the opposition between the two in a very clear light to himself, and that the citizen and the statesman, the philosopher and the man could be united in the same individual, with contradictory sentiments, (a division which in the same man is very unnatural,) so that he might, perhaps, say : Philosophical reason conducts to a different result from that which is established by the state

[1] See the contrast exhibited below in the first effects of Christianity.

religion ; but the latter has in its favour the good fortune which the state has enjoyed in the exercise of religion handed down from our ancestors. Let us follow experience, even where we do not thoroughly understand. Thus speaks Cotta, and thus also many Romans of education (see below) in his time, either more or less explicitly. Or perhaps we may suppose, that men openly expressed this contradiction, and did not scruple to assign the pure truth to the *theologia philosophica*, and to declare the *theologia civilis* only a matter of politics, as Seneca does, when in his book Contra Superstitiones he says.—"We must pray to that great multitude of common gods, which in a long course of time a multifarious superstition has collected, with this feeling, that we are well aware that the reverence shown to them is a compliance rather with custom, than a thing due to the actual truth. All these things the philosopher will observe, as something commanded by the law, not as a thing pleasing to the gods." How miserable for the philosopher, if he had human feelings, to be obliged to stand a cold hypocrite there, where men are gathered together to exercise the highest and noblest privileges of their heart. So Plutarch, out of the fulness of an honest heart (non posse suaviter vivi sec. Epicurum, c. 22.), exclaims, "He feigns prayer and adoration from fear of the multitude! And he utters words which are against his own conviction; and while he is sacrificing, the priest who slays the victim is to him only a butcher!"

In the East, which is less subject to change and fluctuation, where tranquil habits of life are more common, and where a mystical spirit of contemplation, accompanying and spiritualising the symbolical religion of the people, was more prevalent than an intellectual cultivation, opposed to it, and developing itself independently, it was possible that an esoteric and an exoteric religion should proceed hand in hand without change for many centuries. But it was otherwise with the more stirring spirits and habits of the West. Here this independently proceeding development of the intellect must have been at open war with the religion of the people, and as intellectual culture spread itself more widely, so also must a disbelief of the popular religion have been more extensively diffused, and in consequence of the intercourse between the people and the educated classes, the disbelief must also have found its way at last among the people themselves; more

especially since, as this perception of the nothingness of the popular religion spread itself more widely, there would naturally be many who would not, with the precaution of the men of old, hide their new illumination from the multitude, but would think themselves bound to procure for it new adherents, without any regard to the injury of which they might be laying the foundations, without inquiring of themselves, whether they had any thing to offer to the people in the room of that of which they robbed them, in the room of their then source of tranquillity under the storms of life, instead of that which taught them moderation under affliction; and lastly, in the place of their then counterpoise against the power of wild desires and passions. Against men of this sort Polybius, a century and a half before the birth of Christ, had said, "The men of old appear to me, not without good reason, to have introduced the notions of the gods, and the representations of the infernal regions among the multitude; our contemporaries far rather appear to me to be banishing these opinions without good reason, and in a very senseless manner." Whilst with the increase of luxury a superficial education was constantly extending itself among the Romans, and the old simplicity of manners was daily disappearing, the old citizen virtues, the constitution and freedom died away, a general corruption of morals, and a system of slavery was introduced; and the bond was also broken, by which the old state religion had hitherto maintained its ground in the lives of the people. Those philosophical systems among the Greeks, which thought lightly of Divine matters, or altogether denied all objective truth, which left nothing to man but the pleasures of sense, such systems, for instance, as Epicurism and Scepticism, would obtain the most easy and the most general acceptation, because they corresponded the most with the prevailing light-minded sentiments, which were entirely limited to views of the world, and these sentiments again assisted to further these systems. The old religion could not maintain its ground before an inquiring intellect, and to the wit of those who held nothing sacred, and who were without any feeling for Divine things, as for instance Lucian, it was an easy matter to make all religion a subject of ridicule, by coupling it with the vapid and contradictory superstitions of the people. Men saw in the religious systems of different nations which then came into contact with each

other in the enormous empire of Rome, nothing but utter contradiction and opposition. The philosophical systems also exhibited nothing but opposition of sentiments, and left those, who could see in the moral consciousness no criterion of truth, to doubt whether there were any such thing or not. In this sense, as representing the opinions of many eminent and cultivated Romans, with a sneer at all desire for truth, Pilate made the sarcastic inquiry "What is truth?" Many contented themselves with a shallow lifeless Deism, which usually takes its rise where the thirst after a living union with heaven is wanting; a system which, although it denies not the existence of a God, yet drives it as far into the back-ground as possible! a listless God! who suffers every thing to take its own course, so that all belief in any inward connexion between this Divinity and man—any communication of this Divinity to man, would seem to this system fancy and enthusiasm. The world and human nature remain at least free from God. This belief in God, if we can call it a belief, remains dead and fruitless, exercising no influence over the life of man. Man is independent, as if he were his own God; he created for himself his own world, without thinking further on his God. If, however, impelled by his moral feelings, the inward man felt delight in God's law, and endeavoured to fulfil it; yet neither good nor evil came before him with relation to God, except in as far as he thought, "by doing good he shall become like God." The belief in God here produced neither the desire after that ideal perfection of holiness, the contemplation of which shows at the same time to man the corruption of his own nature, so opposite to that holiness; nor that consciousness of guilt, by which man, contemplating the holiness of God within him, feels himself estranged from God: nor does this belief impart any lively power of sanctification. Man is not struck by the inquiry, "How shall I, unclean as I am, approach the Holy God, and stand before him, when he judges me according to the holy law which he has himself engraven on my conscience? What shall I do, to become free from the guilt which oppresses me, and again to attain to communion with him?" To make inquiries such as these, this spirit of Deism considers as fanaticism, and anthropopathism, for while it ridicules the vulgar and superstitious representations of God's anger, and the punishments of the infernal regions—forgetting that superstition, nevertheless,

supposes a real and undeniable desire in human nature, which procures for it admission, and which it only misunderstands, as well as a fundamental and undeniable truth, which it only misunderstands and defaces—forgetting all this, the spirit of Deism casts away from it all notions of God's anger, judgments, or punishments, as representations arising only from the limited nature of the human understanding.

This was Lucian's way of thinking. And Justin Martyr says of the philosophers of his day: "The greater part of them think no more on these questions, whether there be one or more gods; whether there be any Providence or not; than if this knowledge was of no importance in regard to our happiness. They attempt far more to persuade us that the Divinity, although he upholds the whole and whole races, yet cares not for you and me and individual men. We need not, therefore, pray to him at all; because every thing revolves with unchanging laws in one eternal circle [5]."—More lively and penetrating spirits, who felt in the world an infinite Spirit, which animated all things, fell into an error of quite an opposite nature to this Deism, which removed God too far from the world, namely, into a Pantheism, which confused God and the world, which was just as little calculated to bestow tranquillity and consolation. The consideration of nature filled them with the conception of an infinite and Almighty Spirit, not to be judged of by the limits of the human understanding. But this was not for them a strengthening, an elevating, and animating feeling; but rather a feeling which abased and prostrated them, because upon it was founded another feeling, that of their own narrow nature and nothingness; and there was to them no middle ground on which these contemplations and feelings, so opposite to each other, might meet and amalgamate. They beheld only the gulf between the finite and the infinite, between the mortal and the immortal, between the Almighty and the poor weak being; and no means to fill up that gulf. They conceived God only as the infinite Being elevated above frail man, and not as being connected with him, attracting him to himself, and lowering himself down to him. It was only the greatness, not the holiness, nor the love of God, which filled their souls. We may consider Pliny the Elder as the representative of these deep-feeling and inquiring,

[5] Just. Mar. Dial. c. Tryph. Jud. p. 218.

but comfortless men. Polytheism appeared to him only as an invention of human weakness, by which men, unable to embrace and hold fast the whole idea of perfection, broke it up into its several parts. They formed for themselves different ideal beings, as objects of their veneration; each one made for himself his God, as he happened to feel the need of one. The wants of weakness, as well as fear, feigned gods; what God is, if he be distinct from the world, no human understanding can know. But it is a foolish fancy, proceeding from the helpless weakness of human nature, as well as from its pride, to suppose that such an infinite Spirit, be it what it may, can trouble itself with the miserable affairs of man. The vanity of man, and his insatiable longing after existence, have also invented a life after death. Thus even the feeling of his frailness imposes no limits on the wishes of man. A creature full of contradictions! The most unhappy of all creatures! For other creatures have no desires incommensurate with the limits of their nature. Man is full of wishes and desires, running into infinity, which can never be gratified, and his nature is a lie; the greatest poverty united with the greatest pride[6].

Yet the history of all ages proves that man cannot for any length of time disown the desire for religion implanted in his nature. Whenever man, entirely devoted to the world, has for a long time wholly overwhelmed the perception of the Divinity which exists in his nature, and has long entirely estranged himself from Divine things, these at last prevail over humanity with greater force. Man feels that something is wanting to his heart which can be replaced to him by nothing else, he feels a hollowness within him, which can never be satisfied by earthly things, and can find satisfaction and blessing, suited to his condition, in the Divinity alone, and an irresistible desire impels him to seek again his lost connexion with heaven. The times of the dominion of superstition, as history teaches us, are also always times of earthly calamity, for the moral corruption which accompanies superstition, necessarily also destroys all the foundations of earthly prosperity. Thus the times in which superstition extended itself among the Romans were those of the downfal of civil freedom, and of public suffering under cruel despots. But, however, the con-

[6] Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii. c. 7; lib. vii. Procem. c. vii.

sequences of these evils conducted man also to their remedy; for by distress from without man is brought to the consciousness of his own weakness, and his dependence on a higher than earthly power; and when he is forsaken by human help, he is compelled to seek it here. Man becomes induced to look upon his misfortunes as the punishments of a higher Being, and to seek for means by which he may secure again for himself the favour of that Being. He looks back with anxious longings to the time in which his ancestors were so happy in their old faith, and this was the case with many then. They compared these unhappy times with those when the Roman state was in its bloom; and they believed that they had found the cause of the difference, inasmuch as then the gods, who protect the Roman state, had been honoured with piety, whereas they were now neglected. They saw the contentions of philosophical systems one with another, which, while they promised truth, only increased uncertainty and doubt; and all this led their thoughts back to the external authority of the old religion, under which the nations had been so free from doubts, and were so happy. Thus in Minucius Felix, [p. 42. Ed. Ouzel et Meursii, 1672.] the heathen Cœcilius, after painting the contentions and the uncertainties of the systems of human philosophy, and the doubts regarding Providence, which proceeded from a view of the misfortunes of the virtuous, and of the good fortune of the vicious, a sight not unfrequent in the public life of these corrupt days of despotism, draws his conclusion from it in the following words[7].—"How much more reputable and better is it, to receive the doctrines of our ancestors as guides to truth! to honour the religions which have descended to us! to pray to the gods, whom our ancestors taught their children to fear, before they knew right from wrong! And concerning the divinities, not to please one's own fancies, but to trust to our ancestors, who in the childhood of humanity at the birth of the world were honoured by having the gods either as their friends or their kings."

The need of a connexion with heaven, from which man felt himself estranged, and dissatisfaction with the cold and joyless present, obtained a more ready belief for the picture which mythology presented, of a golden age, when gods and men

[7] Comp. Tac. Ann. VI. 22—26.

lived together in intimate union; and warm imaginations looked back on such a state with longing and desire. This belief and this desire, it must be owned, were founded on a great truth, which man could rightly apprehend only through Christianity, and this desire was a kind of intimation which pointed to Christianity. Pausanias, who wrote in the first half of the second century, after introducing an old mythological fable, says, (lib. ii. ch. 8.) "The men of those days, on account of their righteousness and piety, were on terms of hospitality with the gods, and their companions at the board, and when they acted uprightly they openly received honour from the gods, just as they were also visited with anger if they committed any iniquity. And then also they, who are still honoured in this manner, became gods instead of men. Thus also we can believe that a Lycaon was transformed into a beast, and Niobe, the daughter of Tantalus, into a stone. But in my time, when vice has reached its loftiest summit, and has spread itself abroad over the whole country, and in all cities, no one has passed from man to God, except only in name, and out of flattery to power," (*i. e.* in the deification of the emperors) "and the anger of the gods opposes evil more tardily, and is not executed on men till after they have left this world. But much, which used in former times to take place, and which happens even now, those persons, who have mixed falsehood with truth, have rendered incredible to the multitude." After Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who wrote only a few years before the birth of Christ, has told the tale of the discovery of a Vestal virgin's innocence, who had been falsely accused, by the special interference of a supernatural power, he adds, "The atheistic philosophers, if those persons deserve the name of philosophers, who scoff at all the appearances of the gods which have taken place among the Greeks and the barbarians, would deduce all these histories from the trickery of man, and turn them into ridicule, as if none of the gods ever cared for any man; but he who does not deny the gods a providential care over men, but believes that the gods are benevolent to the good, and angry against evil men, will not judge these appearances to be incredible[s]."

From the nature of the case, however, it is clear that a

[s] Ant. Rom. II. 68.

fanatical zeal, where the heat of passion concealed from man the hollowness and falsehood of his faith, might be created for a religion, to which man only betook himself as a refuge in his misery, and in his dread of the abyss of unbelief; a religion which no longer served for the development of man's nature, and into which nevertheless he felt himself driven back from the want of any other; and that men must use every kind of power and art, to uphold that which was in danger of falling from its own internal weakness, and to defend that which was unable to defend itself by its own power. Fanaticism was, therefore, obliged to avail itself of every kind of power in the struggle with Christianity, in order to uphold heathenism, which was fast sinking by its own weakness. Although the Romans had from the oldest times been noted for their repugnance to all foreign sorts of religious worship, yet this trait of the old Roman character had with many altogether disappeared. Because the old national temples of the Romans had lost their respect, in many dispositions, man was inclined to bring in to their assistance foreign modes of worship. Those which obtained the readiest admission were such as consisted of mysterious, symbolical customs, and striking, sounding forms. As is always the case, men looked for some special and higher power in what is dark and mysterious.

The consideration of human nature and history shows us, that the transition from unbelief to superstition is always easy. Both these conditions of the human heart proceed from the self-same ground, the want of that which may be properly called faith, the want of a life in God, of a lively communion with Divine things by means of the inward life; that is, by means of the feelings. Man, whose inward feelings are estranged from the Divine nature, is inclined, sometimes, to deny the reality of that of which he has nothing within him, and for the conception and application of which to himself he has no organ. Or else the irresistible force of his inward nature impels man to recognize that higher power from which he would fain free himself entirely, and to seek that connexion with it which he cannot but feel needful to his comfort; but inasmuch as he is without any real inward sympathy of disposition with the Divinity, and wants a true sense of holiness, the Divinity appears to his darkened religious conscience only under the form of power and arbitrary rule. His conscience paints to him this power as an angry and

avenging power. But as he has no idea of that which the Divinity really is, he cannot duly understand this feeling of estrangement from God, this consciousness of Divine wrath, and instead of seeking in moral things the source of this unquiet feeling, which leaves him no rest by day or night, and from which there is no escape, he fancies that by this or that action, which of itself is perfectly indifferent, he may have offended this higher power, and he seeks by outward observances again to reconcile the offended power. Religion here becomes the source not of life, but of death, the source not of consolation and blessing, but of the most unspeakable anxiety, which torments man day and night, with the spectres of his own imagination. Religion here is no source of sanctification, but may unite in man's heart with every kind of untruth, and serve to promote it. There is one kind of superstition in which, while man torments himself to the utmost, he still remains estranged from the true nature of inward holiness, and while he is restrained from many good works of charity by his constant attendance on mischievous, arbitrary, and outward observances, he is still actuated by a horror of any great sin,—a superstition in which man avoids pleasure so completely that he falls into the opposite extreme; and even the most innocent enjoyments, which a childlike simplicity would receive with thankfulness from the hand of a heavenly Father, he dares not indulge in. But there is also another kind of superstition, which makes it easy for man, by certain outward observances, to silence his conscience under all kinds of sin, and which therefore serves as a welcome support to sin. Both these forms of superstition were in existence at this time. The first sort of superstition is especially painted by Plutarch, in colours which can be taken only from the life, in his excellent work, περὶ δεισιδαιμονιας και ἀθεοτητος, on the contrast between superstition and unbelief. These sketches are taken from his melancholy picture, "Every little evil is increased to the superstitious man by the terrifying spectres of his own anxiety. He looks on himself as a man hated by the gods, one whom they persecute with their wrath. But it is even still worse with him, he dares not employ any means to avoid or remedy his calamities, lest he should appear to be contending against the gods. The physician, the consoling friend, are sent away. 'Leave me,' says the unhappy man, 'let me, godless and cursed, and hated by all the gods,

let me suffer my punishment.' He sits without, covered with sackcloth or with filthy rags, and often rolls and wallows in the mire, and remembers this or that sin"—and how characteristic are these sins! "He has eaten or drunk such and such things[8], or he has gone such a road, which it was not permitted to him to go by the Divine authority. The festal days of the gods fill not the superstitious man with pleasure, but with fear and horror. He gives the lie to the saying of Pythagoras, that then we are happiest when we are going to the gods, for with the superstitious man this is the time of his deepest misery. Temples and altars are a place of refuge for the persecuted, but where other men find a release from their fears, there the superstitious man fears and trembles the most. In his sleep, as well as in his waking hours, the spectres of his anxiety still haunt him. Awake, he does not use his reason, and in his sleep he finds no deliverance from that which disquiets him; his reason is always dreaming, and his fears always awake. He can never escape from the terrific spectres that fright him." Plutarch throws the unbeliever and the superstitious man into strong contrast when he says, "The atheist denies the existence of a God; the superstitious man would be glad to believe in none, but he believes by compulsion, because he is afraid to disbelieve; in his heart he is an unbeliever, but too weak to believe that of the gods, which he would be glad to do." When he says further, that superstition has introduced the existence of unbelief, and serves as an excuse for it, he advances what is certainly true, and what is confirmed by the contemplation of those times, as we may learn from the jesting of a Lucian, although he does not point out the peculiar and the deepest cause of unbelief. Still the contemplation of human nature in general, and of this time in particular, contradicts another statement of Plutarch,—namely, that atheism, on the contrary, did not at all serve the purposes of superstition, and lead to its introduction, for the history of those times exactly shows us most pointedly how completely men were driven, by the irresistible impulses of their nature, to take refuge in superstition, from a comfortless atheism, under which their religious nature could not long remain in peace. Now as this superstition had a deep-laid foundation in these irresistible and so long unsatisfied wants of human nature,

[8] Compare Coloss. ii. 16.

in a sickness of heart which showed itself by many outward appearances, it was therefore impossible that ridicule should cure the superstitious man, and the deeper the sickness lay within him, the less chance there was of curing him thus. Or, even if it were possible to persuade the superstitious man of the nothingness of some one of the objects of his fear, yet that inward restlessness, whose cause was not removed, would create a multitude of other spectres, just as it is useless to persuade a man of diseased imagination of the absurdity of some one of his fancies, as long as the inward disease exists, which is sure to fasten itself, sometimes on one, sometimes on another, of the outward objects presented to it.

There were especially two forms of ancient philosophy, which found a more ready admittance than others among those of the educated classes, who felt most deeply the religious and moral wants of man's nature, and which, connecting themselves in a certain manner with the popular religion, opposed themselves to infidelity. The STOIC philosophy commended itself in a corrupted and effeminate age to many noble and powerful minds, because it raised them above the corruption around them, by an animated zeal for an ideal standard of morality, and because in the self-sufficiency of the philosopher's own heart it taught him to despise the baseness which surrounded him. This philosophy certainly imparted to many powerful spirits a higher moral impulse, which, however, was not untainted by the pride of self-idolatry, although, as it often happens that the influence of a philosophic system is modified by the natural character of the men who adopt it, this pride might often be softened in individuals by their childlike and unassuming dispositions, as in the case of Marcus Aurelius. But there were many who, in the idle contemplation of an ideal standard of perfection, overlooked their own baseness, and who imagined that by an acquiescence, although it were purely intellectual, in the excellence of that standard, they were immediately raised above all sin, while sin was still reigning in their hearts,—men who, bearing in their mouths the loftiest professions of moral wisdom, gave themselves up in their daily lives to every kind of lust, *qui Curios loquuntur et Bacchanalia vivunt!* Stoicism did not teach a belief in a God, who governs all things with a father's love, to whom every individual is an object of regard, and who knows how to unite

the good of the whole with the good of the individual; but in a Saturn, who devours his own children, an universal Spirit, from which every individual existence originally proceeded, and into which they must all, after a certain period, resolve themselves again. Every thing is repeated after immutable laws, and even moral evil is necessary to the establishment of the harmony of the whole. The philosopher looks calmly on the game, and willingly offers up his individual existence to the requirements of the great whole, to which all individuals must be subservient as its parts. The philosopher has the same divine life as Jove, from whom he is sprung. With calm devotion, when his appointed hour comes, he resigns it again to its original source. A cold submission, which overwhelms all our natural feelings, how different is it from the childlike resignation of the Christian, which leaves all the pure feelings of human nature uninjured, a resignation not to the iron decrees of a necessity which commands annihilation, but a resignation founded on a confidence in that eternal love, which restores all which is sacrificed to it in greater splendour and beauty. The Emperor Marcus Aurelius says, "With deep reverence the philosopher speaks thus to nature, which gives all and again reclaims all. Give what thou wilt, and take what thou wilt[9]!" This is not spoken with the pride of one who defies nature, but only in the spirit of one who willingly obeys her. The words would have been words of consolation in the mouth of a childlike reliance on eternal love, which guides all things for the advantage of those who confide in it; but they are dead and comfortless in the mouth of stoic submission to a Deity which devours all things, although the feelings of the man, who thus resigned himself to the will of an unknown God, deserve regard. But how poor, how unquickening to the heart of a man of feeling, are the grounds of consolation by which he endeavours to reason himself out of the desire after an everlasting life.— "Man must consider two things; first, that every thing returns again and again in constant succession, from eternity even till now; and that it matters not, whether one sees the same thing in one hundred or in two hundred years, or in an endless infinity of time. Next, that he who lives the longest and he who

[9] Monolog. x. 14.

dies the soonest, both lose the same, for each loses that only, which he hath, the present moment[1]." (xi. 14.) "Always think that all which happens or will happen, hath been already.—All is only one uniform exhibition!" (x. 27). How miserable is this consideration of the vanity of the constant succession of earthly things, without the feeling that we are destined to a higher and eternal life! "Every active power which ceases at some destined time, suffers no evil from the fact of ceasing; and he, who used this instrument, suffers no evil, because he has ceased. And so also the whole which consists of the collection of all activities, namely, life, when it ceases at its appointed time, suffers no evil, because it has ceased, and he also, who closed this chain at its appointed time, incurs no blame." (xii. 23.) He throws out the following inquiry in xii. 5. "How have the gods, who have ordained every thing well and with love to man, overlooked this one thing alone, that many excellent men, who through pious works and sacrifices have been in confidential intercourse with the gods, when once they have died, never again have come into existence, but are altogether and entirely lost for ever?" He answers thus, "Even if this be so, remember that had necessity ordained it otherwise, it would have been otherwise. For if it were just, if it were even possible, and were it conformable to nature, nature would have made it thus. That it is not so, if it be not so, must be a proof that it could not have been thus appointed." Little, indeed, can cold reflections, such as these, satisfy a heart that trembles before the notion of annihilation, and unsatisfied with the vanity of earthly things, is longing to attain unto that ideal being, which it has pictured to itself in the inmost recesses of the spirit and the affections. It would only be some peculiar natures, entirely absorbed in reflections, and living in the world of their own thoughts, who would thus limit and govern their feelings, their wants, and their wishes. *Naturam frustra expellas furcâ.*

The PLATONIC philosophy was likely to obtain a more general influence than the Stoic among dispositions which were alive to religious wants. History has often to repeat the same statement, that in times of scepticism and of superstition this philosophy

[1] [See De Maistre. Soirées de St. Petersburg, vol. i. p. 294. The germ of many of these sentiments is to be found in Seneca. Ep. 77. H. J. R.]

was efficacious towards exciting and animating more spiritual feelings of religion, and, in some degree, assisted the preparation for the appearance of Christianity. It led man to the consciousness of possessing a nature akin to the Divinity; and, of a connexion with a more exalted system, from which all that is true and good descends upon the divine portion of man's nature, a system, the revelation of which this godlike nature affords him the organs to perceive and to appropriate to himself, from which the divine portion of his inward nature bursts forth, for which it must develope itself independently, and into which it must again enter, freed from every thing of foreign essence, as an integral member of that system. This philosophy did not, as the stoic must have done, if logically pursued, make the divine nature in man something entirely independent, an emanation from a divine original, which as long as he continued in his personality, could exist independently for itself; it did not represent Jupiter to the philosopher merely as the ideal of wisdom and virtue; but it considered the divine part of man's nature only as an indication of a divine origin, only as a conceiving power, which was of no value except when in communion with Him from whom alone it can conceive. It considered man's personality, not as a mere transitory vision, but as destined for a higher development. This philosophy considered the life of the individual, not a mere purposeless game in the succession of the world's events, but it recognised in it a stage of purification and preparation for a more lofty existence. It required from man no suppression of his purer human feelings; on the contrary, it allowed him to seek and to expect the satisfaction of them. It pointed his attention to a higher state of existence, in which the soul, freed from all foreign admixture, might arrive at the clear contemplation of a truth. It did not oppose the existing religions with a bare abstract acknowledgment of religion, but it endeavoured to point out in the whole history of human nature, the traces of a communion between heaven and earth, and of a revelation of the divine nature to man, under a variety of different forms. When scepticism produced the contradiction of religions the one to the other as a proof against their truth; on the contrary, the Platonic religion and philosophy sought to point out the fundamental unity which existed under the multiplicity of forms in which it was revealed; and it endeavoured, by distinguish-

ing between form and essence, between the Spiritual and the Sensual, between the idea and the symbol which represents it, to oppose unbelief and superstition, because it deduced the causes of unbelief and superstition from a confusion between these things, and a neglect of these differences. This method of considering the matter is expressed in the following passage of Plutarch, one of the noblest and wisest representatives of this system, and one in whose writings it was first fully unfolded. Plut. de Iside et Osiride, c. 67. "As the sun, and the moon, heaven, earth, and the sea, are common to all; but yet are differently named by different men, so also, although only one system of nature exists, and one Providence governs, and the powers that serve this Providence are placed over all mankind, yet by the laws of different men, different modes of worship, and different names are established for them; while some make use of darker, others of clearer consecrated symbols, which lead the contemplation, not without danger, to the Divinity; for some who have entirely erred, fell into superstition, but others who endeavoured, as it were, to avoid the slough of superstition, fell, on the other hand, without perceiving it as it were, into the abyss of infidelity." The reverence towards a higher necessity in the religious institutions of mankind, and the recognition of an authority raised above the caprice of man, is beautifully expressed in these words of the pious Plutarch, Adv. Stoic. c. 31: "Since Jove is the beginning, and the centre of every thing, and all arose from Jove, so also must man, if any thing impure or erroneous has stolen into the notions he entertains of the gods, instantly rectify and purify them. But if nothing of this kind has happened, he must leave all men to that mode of worship, to which their laws and their customs lead them." He then quotes the beautiful passage of the Antigone of Sophocles, to prove that the foundation of human religion is to be referred to the Divine impress on man's heart:—

ἀγραπτα κἀσφαλη θεων
Νομιμα————
Οὐ γαρ τι νυν τε κἀχθες, ἀλλ' ἀει ποτε
Ζη.τανταˑκοὐδεις οἰδεν ἐξ ὁτου 'φανη.—SOPH. ANT.

Out of this religious philosophy, therefore, a certain idealism proceeded, which, connecting itself with the popular religion,

endeavoured to establish and defend it against infidelity, and spiritualizing it, to purify it from superstition.

It is in this view that Plutarch says, in his exhortation to the priestess of Isis, ch. 3. "As the long beard and the mantle do not make a philosopher, neither does the linen garb and the shaven head constitute a priest of Isis. But the true priest of Isis is he who, having received through the laws, the customs relative to these gods, inquires into the grounds of them, and philosophises on the truth contained in them." When, for example, superstitious people thought that the god himself inhabited the priestess in the Delphic Oracle, and spoke through her mouth, so that every thing literally came from Phœbus himself, and when, on the contrary, the infidels endeavoured to turn this representation into ridicule, and quoting the bad verses of the Pythian prophetess, laughed at the notion of their coming from Apollo, Plutarch thus delivers his sentiments, De Pythiæ Oracul. ch. 7: "The language, the expression, the words, and the metre come not from God, but from the woman. The god only presents the images to her mind, and lights up in her soul the lamp which illuminates the future. The god uses the soul as an instrument, and the activity of the instrument consists in its property of representing as purely as possible what is communicated to it. It is impossible that it should ever be repeated perfectly pure, nay, without even a large admixture of foreign matter." Ch. 21, de Pyth. Orac.

Thus Porphyry defends the use of images in religion[2], "By forms perceptible to the senses the ancients represented God and his powers, and they imaged the invisible by the visible, for those who had learnt to read, in images as in books, a writing which treats of God. We cannot, therefore, wonder if the most ignorant can see in statues nothing but wood and stone, just as those who are ignorant of the art of writing can see nothing but stone and monuments, nothing but wood in tables, and nothing but a scroll of papyrus in books." These Platonic religious philosophers connected themselves with the polytheism of the popular religion, but they endeavoured to refine and spiritualize it, by constantly insisting more strongly on the unity on which it fundamentally rests. There is, according to them, one source of all existence, the abstract of all per-

[2] In Euseb. Præp. Ev. iii. 7.

fection, from whose super-abundance of life all the gods which are akin to him emanated, and in them the divinity, which comprehends all things within itself, has unfolded itself, so that in every one of these divinities one individual divine property or power, stands forth personified. In these divinities the multitude, who are unable to raise themselves by the force of contemplation, to the one great source of all, pray to these qualities. Every thing, mediately or immediately, resolves itself finally into relation with him; the gods are the mediate powers between the first cause and man distracted by multiplicity. Only in relation to these can all worship, which is testified by objects of sense, be explained: that source of all existence, on the contrary, who is far above all connexion with the visible world, cannot be honoured by any outward observance or sensible object; but to him only the philosopher can raise himself, by pure and spiritual contemplation. Thus speaks Apollonius, of Tyana, in his work on Sacrifices[3]: "To the first of gods, who is ONE, and separated from all others, we show the most worthy honour, when we sacrifice nothing to him, when we light no altar to him, and consecrate nothing material to him, for he wants nothing, nothing even from beings superior to us, and there is no plant which the earth produces, there is no creature of the earth or air, which considered in reference to him, hath not some taint of impurity . . . . . and from the most excellent of Beings we must ask for good things by the most excellent of all we have, that is, by the spirit, which needs no outward organ." This endeavour to refine and spiritualize the religion of Polytheism, must afterwards, when Christianity extended itself with great success, have taken a polemic and apologetic direction. It was thus endeavoured to prop up and support the rotten fabric of heathenism, but this endeavour, often too artificial, served only to show most easily how untenable that religion was, which it was at such pains to defend, and these philosophical refiners of religion themselves afterwards gave, by this means, to the Christians weapons against the popular religion, which these latter knew well how to wield. Already Plutarch had made use of the doctrine of dæmones as intermediate beings between gods and men, in order to uphold the loftiness of the gods, and yet to

[3] Ibid. iv. 13.

defend the popular religion, while he withdrew much which had been by men assigned to the gods, from the race of gods, and attributed it to these intermediate beings. Plut. de Defectu Orac. c. 13, et seq. Porphyry went farther, when he considered these dæmones as impure beings, allied to matter, from which these Platonists declared the origin of all evil. "These beings have their delight in material offerings, by which their sensual appetites were gratified, they enticed men to all evil desires, they endeavoured, by giving themselves out as the gods, to seduce men from their reverence towards the gods, and to spread abroad unworthy notions of these gods, and even of the Almighty God himself. Their arts of deception have found reception from the earliest ages. Hence come the unworthy and unseemly stories of the gods, which are propagated among the multitude and supported even by the poets and philosophers[4]." It is easy to see how well such discussion would serve the purposes of the Christian opponents of heathenism.

Thus these Platonists, by their spiritualizing idealism, and their mysticism which excited, or pretended and feigned an inward religious life, while they enlisted the imagination, a certain convenient, agreeable, and indolent contemplation, and a speculation often obscure, into the service of the popular religion, endeavoured to restore that religion to life, in some degree, among the educated classes, and excite some degree of zeal for its advancement. But the knowledge of religion, and a religious life among the common people, was utterly incapable of being amended by these refinements on religion. The people still clung to the outward parts of their worship, they still clung to the old superstition, which the philosophers endeavoured to advance, although they refined and spiritualized it, and they were totally unable to comprehend any thing of those spiritualizations, and symbolical meanings of their religious worship. Nay, these Platonists themselves considered the spiritual knowledge of religion to be attainable only by the philosopher, who lived in contemplation; to it man could only arrive by means of ἐπιστημη, while the people must content themselves with the δοξα, in which truth and falsehood are mingled together. It was besides impossible to oppose superstition effectually, by

[4] Porphyry ap. Euseb. Præp. iv. 21, 22. [This is the substance of a considerable part of the passage of Porphyry there found, but not a translation of any part of it.—H. J. R.]

theoretically opposing to it purer general principles of religion. As its foundation lay in a practical want, it could only be opposed successfully in a practical manner. An unsatisfied religious yearning, the yearning after a deliverance from that feeling of guilt which was deeply implanted in the heart, though it might not have attained the character of a perfect conviction of sin, was the source of superstition. This longing must be satisfied, and the distracted heart eased of this oppressive burden, and then superstition would fall of itself, together with its cause. Plutarch casts on superstition the reproach, that it looks on the gods, who are full of fatherly love, only as beings to be feared; but it was of no purpose, to exhort men to confide in the kind and preserving deities (θεοι σωτηρες και μειλιχιοι): the feeling of estrangement from God in their hearts opposed itself to the reception of such a notion of the gods. Hence arose the attempts to find means of purification for the soul, which men believed might be obtained by manifold outward ceremonies, and magic formulæ. The latter Platonists themselves invented many, in order to satisfy this desire. Now, inasmuch as these Platonists adhered to the popular religion, and endeavoured to melt this down with their philosophical ideas, they were able, by an artful admixture of truth and falsehood, to receive many forms of superstition into their systems, and to give them a still stronger ground of acceptance by means of their method of spiritualizing them. The experience of later times, (as, for instance, the case of the controversies about images among the schoolmen,) shows that a superstition refined by an idealistic system of this sort is most difficult to uproot. Platonism awakened an indefinite desire after the supernatural, and after a communion with the invisible world, which it was unable to satisfy. The less this indefinite desire was understood by those who felt it, the more an imaginative power, unfettered by laws and a speculative curiosity, which delighted to look into hidden things, mingled themselves with it, by so much the more occasion was given for delusions of every kind, and so much the more did those who wished to thrust themselves into the invisible world by means of their own choosing, and avoided as much as possible all attempts to realise godliness in their hearts, give themselves up to most dangerous self-deceits and to deceptions arising from the influence of others.

There were at that time roving about the Roman empire many

pretenders to supernatural powers, for whom the existence of such a feeling and desire procured acceptance, men in whom, as is usually the case during such a season of religious excitement, a degree of self-delusion or enthusiasm was mingled with more or less of intentional deceit. Such was that Alexander of Abonoteichos, in Pontus, whose life Lucian has written after his usual satirical manner, a man whose pretended enchantments and predictions found credit all over the world, from Pontus to Rome, one who was honoured and consulted as a prophet, even by men who held the highest and most distinguished offices in the Roman state. Among the better men of this sort we must class the Apollonius of Tyana, so celebrated in the apostolic age, who was probably possessed of more extraordinary gifts, and was probably under the influence of the Divine Spirit, although by spiritual pride and vanity he had at least in part destroyed the talent intrusted to him, instead of keeping it pure, and increasing it by faithful and careful use. But it is difficult to judge of this man accurately, from the exceeding paucity of authentic accounts. Those who, like Philostratus, in the third century, have endeavoured to represent him as one of the heroes of the ancient popular religion, have injured him most deeply in the eyes of posterity. He went about to stir up and animate a spirit of religious faith, and furthered fanaticism, while he gave food to that curiosity which inquires after the things of the invisible world. He spoke against superstition, because it served to promote immorality when men believed that they could buy impunity for crime by sacrifices; and he declared, that without a moral state of the heart and feelings no sacrifice could be well pleasing to the gods. He exclaimed against the cruel custom of shows of gladiators, for when the Athenians, who were in the habit of exhibiting these shows, invited him to their assembly, he answered that he could not enter a place stained with so much human blood, and that he wondered the goddess did not leave their city [5]. When the president of the Eleusinian

[5] Just like Demonax, another remarkable man of Athens, of the age of the Antonines, who, instead of the mystical pantheism, from which Apollonius of Tyana set out, opposed the superstition of the people by another more temperate one. When the Athenians wished to exhibit a shew of gladiators, he told them they must first pull down the altar of Pity of ἔλεος, which their city more than all other cities honoured. The answer to the inquiry, whether the soul is immortal? which Demonax gave—'yes! immortal; but like every thing:' may be compared with the

mysteries refused to initiate Apollonius of Tyana, it is difficult to determine whether the Hierophant was really in earnest, and thought Apollonius an enchanter, who used forbidden arts, or whether he was not rather jealous of the great influence opposed to priestcraft, which Apollonius exercised on the people, and to such a degree, that many considered intercourse with him of far more consequence than initiation into the mysteries. The concluding formula of all the prayers of Apollonius, which he recommended also to others, who would pray, although opposed to the notions of those who think the heart of the supplicant of no consequence in prayer, yet shews wherein was his greatest deficiency, a deficiency which might well prove to him the source of most of his self-delusions, I mean the prayer: "*Give me, ye gods, that which I deserve*"—δοιητε μοι τα ὀφειλομενα: the direct contrary to the prayer, "*Forgive us our debts!*"

A desire universally displayed itself for a revelation from heaven, which might ensure to the inquiring mind that tranquillity which was neither to be found in the contending systems of ancient philosophy, nor in the antiquated religions, now called back to the world in an age of artificial refinement. Porphyry, that zealous defender of the old religion, himself alludes to this desire, so deeply felt; a desire which, while he supports himself on the authority of the promises of the gods, he endeavoured to satisfy in his collection of old oracular responses, as the groundwork of a system of theology. On this subject he says [6], "The utility of this work those will best be able to estimate, who, feeling an anxious desire after the truth, have wished that some open vision of the gods might be granted to them, and set them free from their doubts."

The composer of a sort of philosophico-religious romance, called the Clementine, has given us a sketch of the life of one of this class of men; a man thirsting after truth, but tormented by doubt from his very childhood, and disquieted by the strife of contending opinions, who at last is led to embrace Christianity in consequence of this long unsatisfied desire after truth, the Heavenly Father thus leading him to a knowledge of his Son.

declaration of Apollonius, that being born and dying are only an illusion, (Maja) the same substance sometimes withdrawing itself into the invisible, and at other times clothing itself in gross earthly forms. See his Ep. 58, a letter which is most probably genuine.

[6] Περι τῆς ἐκ λογιων φιλοσοφιας, in Euseb. Præpar. iv. 7.

It is but a picture, but it is a picture drawn from the life, which we shall here make use of to characterise many of the thinking spirits of this period.

Clement, a man of a noble Roman family, who lived about the time of the first preaching of the Gospel, gives the following account of himself. "From the earliest days of my youth, doubts, like the following, which have come into my mind, I know not how, have constantly exercised my thoughts. After death shall I exist no longer, and will no one ever remember me? does infinite time thus drown all human affairs in oblivion? Then will it be, as if I had never been born? When was the world created, and what was before the world was? If it has existed from eternity, it will last to all eternity: if it had a beginning, it must have an end. And what will again exist after the world, unless it be a death-like stillness? Or, perhaps, something may then exist, which now it is impossible to conceive. Whilst I, continues he, incessantly bore about with me thoughts like these, I know not whence, I was constantly tormented, so that I grew pale and wasted away—and what was most dreadful of all, when I endeavoured to free myself from this anxiety as being useless, these sufferings only awoke again in my heart with stronger violence, and inflicted on me more severe vexation. I knew not that in these tormenting thoughts I had a good companion, who was leading me to eternal life, as I afterwards found by experience, and I thank God, who rules all things, for this, because by these thoughts, which at first so tortured me, I was obliged to search into the nature of things, and thus to find out the truth. And when this had taken place, I pitied as wretched creatures the very men, whom at first in my ignorance I was in danger of considering happy. As I found myself harassed by these thoughts from my very childhood, I visited the schools of the philosophers, in order that I might have something certain to repose upon, and I saw there nothing but building up and pulling down of systems, strife and contradiction; and sometimes, for instance, the doctrine that the soul is immortal gained the victory; sometimes the notion that it is mortal: when the first carried the day, I was glad; if the latter triumphed, I was again cast down. Thus was I driven backwards and forwards by different arguments, and I was obliged to suppose that things appear not as they really are, but as they are represented from

this side or from that. I was hence seized with greater dizziness, and I sighed from the bottom of my heart." Clement had already determined, as he could attain by reason to no sure and certain persuasion, to seek the resolution of his doubts by some other method, and to journey into Egypt, the land of mysteries and apparitions, and there to search for some magician who could call a spirit for him from the dead. The appearance of a ghost would give him an ocular proof of the immortality of the soul, and then, once firmly persuaded by the evidence of his own eyes of this truth, no argument should ever again be able to make him waver. The representations, however, of a philosopher of calmer thoughts restrained him from seeking the truth by means of these forbidden arts, after the use of which he would never again obtain peace of conscience. In this frame of mind, doubting, wavering, inquiring, tormented, and deeply agitated, the preaching of the Gospel, supported by proofs reposing on the operations of the Spirit and on miracles, reached him, and his case may represent to us that of many others.

If then, after the representation which has been given of the religious condition of the heathen world at this period, we consider its relation to Christianity; we find that on the one hand Christianity was opposed by unbelief, a frame of mind as devoid of all capacity for the perception of any thing Divine, as it was of all religion; a frame of mind which to that doctrine, when it preached Divine truth, offered in reply the inquiry, "What is truth?"—And on the other hand, it was opposed by a kind of fanatical attachment to the old popular religion, revived by causes we have above related, and by a blind superstition, which those who endeavoured to spiritualize it, only promoted, a disposition of mind to which the worship of God in spirit and in truth was an offence. But the restless religious desire of many hearts, which sought for rest, the thirst after some new connexion with heaven, and after some revelation from heaven, placed beyond all doubt, which, amid the strife of human opinions might assure its followers tranquillity and confidence, were all calculated to lead men's souls to Christianity. And yet this indefinite desire, often uncertain even of what it wished itself, might also deliver up men to every kind of delusion; and spirits, which promised to impart the powers of the invisible world, and to explain its mysteries, and thereby flattered the natural inclinations of men, would often be more readily received than the

simple Gospel which opposed those inclinations. Only there was in Christianity a power of God, which put to shame all arts of delusion, which could make its way, through all the adverse powers of delusion, to the human heart, and prove itself to be that which could alone satisfy all its wants; and which alone was able utterly to uproot that superstition, which no Platonic philosophy could triumph over, because it alone brought a radical cure to the real source of the disease. But the Platonic philosophy, inasmuch as it excited more lively inward feelings of religion, and gave them a more spiritual turn which did not correspond with the popular religion, was, in some degree, a preparation for Christianity; and yet, on the other hand, it might perhaps oppose the humble spirit of the simple Gospel with its fantastic mystico-poetical religion, which has its attractions for the vanity of the natural man that delights in the Gorgeous, for, although all that is Divine bears the impress of simplicity, yet man is least of all inclined to inquire into what is simple. This Platonic religious eclecticism, accustomed to melt down every thing, even discordant elements, together, and amalgamate them, could not so easily bring itself to recognize only one thing which was needful for man, to give up the whole man to this one, and to seek every thing in this one. With those, who had more than others, although not exactly what human nature desires for the healing of its sickness, and the satisfaction of its wants, it was a harder sacrifice than with other men, to acknowledge the insufficiency of that in which their advantages lay, and to clothe themselves in that humility, without which the riches of the Gospel cannot be received nor enjoyed.

If we now pass over to the religious condition of the Jewish people, we shall perceive between Judaism and heathenism that immense difference, which must exist between a revelation of the living God and natural religion. Witness the pure religious and moral spirit of Judaism; the idea of one holy, almighty, all-wise, merciful, and independent God, as Creator and governor of the world, to whose glory all things must be subservient, and on whom every thing must depend; and this notion, not the possession of a small class of initiated persons, not an esoteric doctrine of the priests, but the possession of a whole people, the centre of a whole system of popular religion; witness the contrast between holiness and sin, which was not to be found, so clearly defined, in the natural religion of the hea-

thens. It was, however, in the divine scheme of education for the human race, the loftiest purpose of this religion, to awaken desires of the heart and the spirit which it could not satisfy,—the satisfaction of which it could and should only prepare and promise; to call forth the consciousness of a division in the heart of man, which it could not remedy; but still there remained under every change of human civilization, a divine power in this religion, there was here an objective, authentic ground of belief, and not a mere texture of varied myths and stories, into which a religious meaning must be conveyed, or from which only some dark glimmering of religious thought proceeded. Hence this religion was enabled to preserve its authority, in general, unshaken under all the political storms, which agitated the Jewish people; nay, in after times, under all the oppressions of this nation, its faith in the old religion was altogether only surer and stronger. But nevertheless, even this religion was unable to escape the general causes of decay, which have in the end produced the downfall of all religious institutions. As a peculiar form of religion, it was unable to come forth victorious as Christianity has often done in similar times of excitement, with a more splendid display of its excellence, because, as a peculiar form of religion, it was only given and appropriate to man, in one definite stage of development; and hence, if it endured longer, it must necessarily overlast its time, and become lifeless and dead. From a struggle with those causes of decay, no victorious result could arise here, except a revival in the purer and nobler form of Christianity.

A penetration into the spirit of the Jewish religion was not the necessary consequence of a strict adherence to its letter. The remembrance of God's wonderful dealings with these people, and of their theocratic economy, so pregnant with instructive hints for the development of the whole history of man, with the major part of the Jews served only as the food of a carnal pride. Instead of thinking how they might make themselves worthy of that peculiar guidance which their forefathers had enjoyed, and how they might correspond, in heart and conduct, to that theocratic economy, they fancied themselves the native members of this theocracy, in virtue of their corporal descent from the patriarchs; and in virtue of a mere outward worship of God, they considered themselves as already citizens of the kingdom of heaven, and entitled to the enjoyment of all the rights of such citizens. The idea,

which formed the centre-point of the whole theocratic economy, the idea of a Messiah, had only been brought forward with more lively feelings through the oppressions and the sufferings of the latter period of their history. With the warmest hopes and desires, many were awaiting the promised Deliverer from misery, by whom the fallen theocracy was again to be renewed with greater splendour ; but then, the only misery they felt was their temporal misery, and not that spiritual misery, from which the temporal had proceeded, and they expected in their Messiah nothing but a deliverer from their temporal calamities. They were unable to comprehend the idea of the Messiah, and the kingdom which he was to found, in any but a worldly point of view. With heavenly miraculous powers, he was to serve for the gratification of their worldly desires, to free them from the Roman yoke, to execute vengeance on their enemies, and to found a kingdom of earthly splendour, in which they were to delight themselves with the enjoyment of all the pleasures which an imagination, inclined indeed to the wonderful, but still looking only to sensual things, could set before their eyes. The nation was destitute of guides and teachers who could undeceive it, and really instruct it in the true nature of their religion, and of the divine economy. For the most part, their instructors were blind leaders of the blind, who only strengthened the people still more in their fleshly and perverted heart, and in the fancies to which this heart led them. Great harm had particularly been wrought by a blind fanatical zealot, Judas of Gamala, or the Galilean, who came forward about the year fourteen after the birth of Christ, on occasion of the taxing of the people, instituted by Augustus Cæsar. He urged the people to throw off the bondage of Rome at once, and to acknowledge no sovereign but God alone ! As if a people, who were as far as the Jewish people from the only true moral freedom, and governed by wild passions and desires, could have been in a condition to enjoy even a mere political freedom ! As if they, whose whole heart was estranged from God, and given up to so many idolatrous desires, could have acknowledged God as the sovereign in reality and truth ! This fleshly conception of the idea of the kingdom of God, and of the freedom and the rights of its citizens—this mixture of worldly and spiritual things—was, as in all other times, the source of a wild fanaticism among the Jews, which at length brought down upon

Jerusalem its temporal destruction. They were, therefore, unable to comprehend what the Son of God said to them of that true freedom, which he had come from heaven to bestow on man, sighing under the bondage of sin. As they had been unable to know the Father by their earthly-mindedness, so they were also unable to know the Son also. They were unable to recognise in him the Messiah, because they did not understand the voice of the Father, which spoke of him in the wants and desires of the human heart; but they would only listen to the voice of the world and of the flesh, that spoke in their own hearts; and they therefore chose to have a Messiah to whom the voice of their heart called them, as men, not taught by God, but under the influence of ungodly feelings; a Messiah, who would have satisfied their expectations and wishes, founded on earthly considerations. As Christ, whose warning voice they would not hear, predicted to them, to their destruction they became, through this fleshly mind, a prey to the delusive arts of all false prophets who chose to flatter this fleshly disposition in their idle promises. When the Temple of Jerusalem was already on fire, such a false prophet was able to persuade whole hosts of the people, that God, from out of the temple, would show them a way of salvation by some miracle[7]; and befooled by him, thousands became the victims of the flames or of the Roman sword. Josephus, who was no Christian, but who considered the fate of his people in a more unprejudiced manner than others of his nation, concludes his narration of this circumstance with the following remarkable reflection:—"The unhappy people then allowed themselves to be only deluded by deceivers, who dared to lie in the name of God. But they paid no regard to the clear miracles which announced impending destruction, and believed them not, but like men utterly confounded, and as if they had neither eyes nor understanding, they heard nothing which God himself proclaimed."

Among the Jewish theologians in Palestine, we find the three grand classes, which usually form themselves during the decay of a religion, and oppose each other. One class consists of those who, confusing the inward and the outward things of religion, or rather forgetting the inward in the outward, make a

[7] Such a sign from heaven as they had often required from Him, who wished to show them the way to their true good.

quantity of human statutes, engrafted on the original religion, the chief business of religion, and place its whole essence in a round of lifeless ceremonies, and a dead, common-place orthodoxy. Another class is formed of those who oppose this false pretence to religion, and this falsification of its original excellence; but, inasmuch as they are destitute of a lively sense of religion within, and a hearty desire for it, as well as of a capacity for the perception of Divine things, they overstep the mark in their opposition, because the true spiritual feelings do not accompany and direct with them their critical judgment, and their cold and negative disposition, while it justly attacks many human statutes which give themselves out as Divine laws, throws away at the same time, under the title of additions, many deep truths, which it is unable, with its earthly notions, to comprehend. Lastly, come those more quiet, but more warm-hearted spirits, with whom the power of religious imagination or feeling is too predominant, who withdraw into themselves from the strife of opinions among the learned in Scripture, and seeking the interpretation of the meaning of the old documents of religion in their subjective feelings or imaginations, become mystics sometimes of a practical, sometimes of a contemplative character. These three grand classes of religious characters, which constantly return under a change of form, we here recognise in the three sects of the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

The Pharisees[8] propagated in their schools, by means of oral instruction, a Cabbala, that is to say, a kind of polished speculative theology, composed of a mixture of the Mosaic religion with other eastern religious elements, which they fixed upon the original documents of the religion, by means of an allegorical spirit of interpretation. By means of arbitrary verbal criticism, mystical meanings, and pretended traditions from their ancestors, they had connected the ceremonial law of Moses with a multitude of new outward precepts, on the rigid observance of

[8] This name is derived from the verb פָּרַשׁ, either in the sense of "*to interpret*," as פּוֹרֵשׁ the ἐξηγητης του νομου κατ' ἐξοχην, which honour the Pharisees claimed, according to Josephus, or in the sense of "*to separate*," פָּרוּשׁ (which rather more nearly resembles the Greek φαρισαιος,) "the man *separated from* the profane multitude, (from the עַם־הָאָרֶץ,) and one who wished to be revered as a holier man."

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which they often laid more stress than on the works of righteousness and charity. They had invented for themselves many external offices of worship, which they considered as works of supererogation, by means of which many who fancied, in the blindness of their hearts, that they had from their youth up fulfilled the law, imagined that they could do even more than the law required, and obtain for themselves a higher degree of holiness. In estimating, however, the character of these Pharisees, as well as that of the monks in later times, we must not put them all in one class, but accurately separate the different classes of men from one another. The greater part of them were, more or less, hypocrites, or mere pretenders to holiness, whose chief care was about their own reputation and dominion over others, and who endeavoured to gain respect in the eyes of the people by their outward observances, while with all this outward show their hearts were full of wicked desires, and like to painted sepulchres, and while in secret they often delivered themselves up to the gratification of their sinful passions. But others, no doubt, were in earnest in their endeavours after justification and holiness; they observed conscientiously what their statutes prescribed, and sought to triumph over evil by their ascetic severities. Their error only consisted in this, that they thought they could, by their own endeavours, take by storm that which the grace of God alone can bestow on humble and on broken hearts. In this struggle many of them probably felt those very experiences which St. Paul, once a Pharisee himself, has painted so naturally in the seventh chapter of his epistle to the Romans.

The Sadducees were, for the most part, rich people living in great comfort, who forgot in the enjoyments of the world the higher desires of their nature; their hearts were not softened by necessity, so often the instructor of man, and compelled to seek the pleasures of a better world, but they were quite right in opposing the self-invented ceremonial of the Pharisees, their troublesome precepts and their vain refinements. But while they opposed these adulterations of the original Mosaic religion, they were alike unwilling to acknowledge that historical development which, under the guidance of God's Spirit, had been bestowed upon it; and many religious truths, which had first been developed by the prophets, were therefore denied by them. They ascribed Divine authority to the Pentateuch alone, and would acknowledge those religious truths only, which a literal

interpretation could deduce from that volume. They therefore denied the doctrine of the resurrection, and of the destination of the soul for an eternal existence. They also, according to Acts xxiii. 8, rejected a belief in angels. We cannot, however, see how they could reconcile this with their belief in the Divine authority of the Pentateuch, unless, perhaps, like other Jewish sects, they considered the apparitions of angels as mere impersonal and transient forms of appearance of the Deity. Although it cannot be directly concluded from the account of Josephus, that they altogether denied the doctrine of a Providence, which extended to the affairs of individuals, it is, however, clear, in conformity to their negative disposition in religion, that they made God as much as possible an inactive spectator of the course of events, and supposed him to take far less interest in human occurrences than was consistent with the spirit of the theocracy. They ascribed a pre-eminent value above every thing besides to an external morality in fulfilment of the law, and hence, perhaps, came their name [9]. The less they penetrated below the surface of morals, the more they were able to ascribe to man a sufficiency in himself, and to leave every thing to depend on the spontaneous determinations of the human will. The hard, cold, heartless disposition, which Josephus attributes to the Sadducees, is also in excellent keeping with this way of thinking. Although Josephus himself was a Pharisee, yet he shows himself, nevertheless, always unprejudiced in his judgments; nay, he often lays bare and naked the faults of the Pharisees themselves, and there is accordingly no reason to suspect him in this instance of gratifying his enmity at the expence of truth.—We certainly cannot, from the nature of the doctrines of the later Karäites, who were moderate enemies of the traditions of the Pharisees, draw any conclusion as to the nature of those of the Sadducees. Indeed, it is a matter of enquiry generally, whether these latter ever were in open connection with the former (the Sadducees), although their enemies' zeal for the discovery of heresies was naturally gratified in attaching this imputation upon them.

A company of pious men, much experienced in the trials of the outward and of the inward life, had withdrawn themselves out of the strife of theological and political parties, at first

[9] [From צָדַק he was just or righteous. Others deduce it from Sadoc, a proper name.—H. J. R.]

apparently (according to Pliny the elder), to the western side of the Dead Sea; where they lived together in intimate connection, partly in the same sort of society as the monks of later days, and partly as mystical orders in all periods have done.—From this society, other smaller ones afterwards proceeded, and spread themselves over all Palestine. They were called Essenes, (Εσσηνοι or Εσσαιοι). They employed themselves in the arts of peace, agriculture, pasture, handicraft works, and especially in the art of healing, while they took great delight in investigating the healing powers of nature. It is probable, also, that they imagined themselves under the guidance of a supernatural illumination in their search into nature, and their use of her powers. Their natural knowledge, and their art of healing, appear also to have had a religious, theosophic character, as they professed also to have peculiar prophetical gifts. The Essenes were, no doubt, distinguished from the mass of ordinary Jews by this, that they knew and loved something higher than the outward ceremonial, and a dead faith; that they did really strive after holiness of heart, and inward communion with God. Their quiet, pious habits also rendered them remarkable, and by means of these they remained quiet amidst all the political changes, respected by all parties, even by the heathens; and by their laborious habits and kindness, their obedience towards the higher powers, as ordained of God, their fidelity and love of truth, they were enabled to extend themselves in all directions. In their society every *yea* and *nay* had the force of an oath; for every oath, said they, presupposes a mutual distrust which ought not to be the case among a society of honest men. Only in one case was an oath suffered amongst them, namely, as a pledge for those who after a three years' noviciate were to be received into the number of the initiated. According to the portraiture of them, given by Philo the Alexandrian, in his separate treatise concerning the "True Freedom of the Virtuous," we should take the Essenes for men of an entirely practical religious turn, far removed from all theosophy and all idle speculation; and we should ascribe to them an inward religious habit of mind, free from all mixture of superstition and reliance on outward things. But the account of Philo does not at all accord with that of Josephus, and the more historical Josephus deserves in general more credit than Philo, who was too apt to indulge in philosophizing and idealism.

Besides, Josephus had more opportunity of knowing this sect thoroughly, than Philo; for Philo lived in Egypt, and the Essenes did not extend beyond Palestine.—Josephus had here passed the greater part of his life, and had certainly taken all necessary pains to inform himself accurately of the nature of the different sects, among which he was determined, as a youth of sixteen years of age, to make choice, although he can hardly have completely passed through a noviciate in the sect of the Essenes, because he made the round of all the three Jewish sects, in a period of from three to four years. Josephus, also, shows himself completely unprejudiced in this description; while Philo, on the contrary, wished to represent the Essenes to the more cultivated Greeks as models of practical wisdom, and therefore he allowed himself to represent much, not as it really was, but as it suited his purpose. We must conclude that the Essenes did also busy themselves with theosophy, and pretended to impart to those of their own order disclosures relating to the supernatural world of spirits, because those who were about to be initiated, were obliged to swear that they would never make known to any one the names of the angels then to be communicated to them. The manner, in which they kept secret the ancient books of their sect, is also a proof of this. And, indeed, Philo himself makes it probable, when he says, that they employed themselves with a φιλοσοφια δια συμβολων, a philosophy, which was supported by an allegorical interpretation of Scripture; for this kind of allegorizing interpretation was usually the accompaniment of a certain speculative system. According to Philo they rejected the sacrifice of victims, because they considered, that to consecrate and offer up themselves wholly to God, was the only true sacrifice, the only sacrifice worthy of God. But according to Josephus they certainly considered sacrifice as something peculiarly holy, but they thought that from its peculiar holiness it must have been desecrated by the profane Jews in the temple of Jerusalem, and that it could be worthily celebrated only in their holy community, just as mystic sects of this nature are constantly accustomed to make the *objective* acts of religion dependent on the *subjective* condition of those who perform or take part in them. In the troublesome and superstitious observance of the rest of the Sabbath, according to the letter, and not according to the spirit, they went even farther than the other Jews, only with this difference, that they were in good earnest in the matter, while the Pharisees by their

casuistry relaxed their rules, or drew them tighter, just as it suited their purpose. The Essenes not only strenuously abhorred, like the other Jews, contact with the uncircumcised, but, having divided themselves into four classes, the Essenes of a higher grade were averse from contact with those of a lower, as if they were rendered unclean by it, and when any thing of this kind did happen, they purified themselves after it. Like many other Jews, they attributed great value, in general, to lustration by bathing in cold water. To their ascetic notions the constant and healthy practice in the East of anointing with oil seemed unholy, and if it befel any one of them, he was obliged to purify himself. It was also a great abomination to them, to eat any food except such as had been prepared by persons of their own sect. They would die rather than eat of any other. This is a sufficient proof that although the Essenes might possess a certain inward religious life, and a certain practical piety, yet that these qualities with them, as well as with many other mystical sects (as, for example, those of the middle ages) were connected with a theosophy, which desired to know things hidden from human reason, (ἐμβατευειν εἰς ἃ τις μη ἑωρακεν,) and therefore lost itself in idle imaginations and dreams, and were also mixed up with an outward asceticism, a proud spirit of separation from the rest of mankind, and superstitious observances and demeanours totally at variance with the true spirit of inward religion.

The religious and theological character of the Jews who dwelt at Alexandria, that remarkable intermediate spot between the eastern and the western world, was of an entirely peculiar cast. By means of constant intercourse with educated Hellenists in one of the most flourishing seats of Hellenistic literature and civilization, they must have gradually lost their usual abhorrence of foreign customs. By their sojourn among the Greeks for centuries, separated from their original country, they gradually assumed the Greek language, and much of Greek manners; they became more and more estranged from the language and the habits of their own nation, and many of them were strongly attracted by the charms of Greek literature, and especially of Greek philosophy[1].

[1] [A very elaborate work on the Alexandrian Jews has appeared since the publication of this History. It is entitled, Geschichtliche Darstellung der Jüdisch-Alexandrinischen Religions-Philosophie: verfasst von A. F. Dähne, P.D. &c. Halle, 1834. 2 vol. 8vo.—H. J. R.]

Under these circumstances two cases might occur. *One* would be the case of those, who became so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of this foreign culture, and Hellenized to such an extent, that they lost even that reverence for the ancient holy institutions of their people, so deeply implanted in the heart of a Jew. A few general superficial ideas, skimmed from Grecian philosophy, and a certain moral cultivation, became to these men their highest law, and after this miserable and false illumination, they dared to condemn and to ridicule the holy history and documents of their people, which they could not understand, because they were deficient in the deep religious feeling and the knowledge requisite for that purpose. We find in Philo traces of this kind of the *Jewish* scoffer in places where we can hardly imagine he is glancing at the heathen. As when he opposes Moses, who remained always true to his people in the seductions of the Egyptian court, to these renegades: "Who transgress the law, in which they have been born and educated, who destroy the customs of their country, to which no blame can be attached, and in their prejudice for that which is new, lose all remembrance of that which is old[2]." In another place[3] he thus expresses himself against such people; "Who are disinclined to the religious system of their country; who always look on the laws of their religion to blame and accuse them, and use these and similar[4] narrations profligately, as a support to their Atheism (ἀθεοτης,) and say, 'Do you really think highly of your laws, and imagine that they contain the rules of truth? Behold! what you call your holy Scriptures, do they not contain myths and fables which you yourselves laugh at when you hear them from others[5]?'"

Nevertheless, the faith in the Divine origin, and the holiness of their religion, had taken too deep hold on the hearts of most

[2] De vita Mosis, i. 607.

[3] De confus. ling. 320.

[4] He is speaking here of the confusion of tongues at the tower of Babel.

[5] Also, in the passage de Nom. Mutat. p. 1053, where Philo introduces the sarcasms of an ἀθεος, or ἀσεβης, the bitterness with which he speaks, may well lead us to conclude that this scoffer was an unbelieving Jew. In an heathen this jesting could not have appeared so striking to him. He looks upon it as a punishment of the profligate opinions of this man, that he so soon after hanged himself, ἵν' ὁ μιαρος και δυσκαθαρτος μηδε καθαρῳ θανατῳ τελευτησῃ. By means of his allegorical explanations Philo wished to remove what had given rise to the ridicule of this man, in order that others might not fall into a similar snare and punishment.

Jews; the seed of religion, which had been sown in their earliest childhood, and had spread over all their life, had made too deep impression on their hearts, to allow of its being thus dissipated and destroyed. Although they were attracted by the Greek philosophy, and especially by that which had chiefly prevailed at Alexandria in later times, and which by its nature would give the best opportunity for a religious spirit to connect itself with, namely, the Platonic, yet still they were far from consciously and intentionally sacrificing their religion and their holy writings to the authority of a human philosophy. They had far rather learnt, by comparing the religious knowledge of their people with that of the Egyptians and the Greeks, day by day to estimate better the distinguished character of their old religion, and to see more clearly the Divine providence which guided their peculiar history, and the influence which these were destined to bear on the whole human race. Philo, whom we may name the representative of these Alexandrians, speaks thus [6]:—"That, which the most genuine philosophy alone is able to impart to its scholars, the knowledge of the Most High, is communicated by our laws and our customs to the whole Jewish people." He declares it to be the destiny of the Jews, inasmuch as they alone were consecrated as a whole people, to the worship of the One true God, and were to spread this to the whole human race, that they were to be priests and prophets for all mankind [7]. Philo was well aware that it is the characteristic of the Divine revelation, to let the light of truth generally shine before all men, and not to keep it purposely hidden. The more easily the people of Alexandria might be seduced into joining in the traffic in secret things, attendant on the mysteries; the more remarkable, therefore, and pleasing is an expression in an Alexandrian, which shows, that he recognised the character of simplicity and publicity in Judaism, and opposed it to the hatred of the light, incident to the mysteries [8]. "All mysteries, all such pomp and such tricks Moses removed far from the sacred lawgiving, because he did not desire that those who were educated in such a religion, suffering themselves to be blinded by mysterious matters, should neglect the truth, nor follow what belongs

[6] De Caritate, 699.

[7] De Abrah. 364; De vita Mosis, i. 625.

[8] De Victimas Offerent. p. 56.

to the night and darkness, neglecting that which is worthy of the light and of the day. None also of those, who know Moses, and reckon themselves among his disciples, allow themselves to be initiated into such mysteries nor initiate others; for either to learn or to teach these mysteries, is no slight crime[9]; for ye initiated! wherefore, if these are honourable and useful things, do ye shut yourselves up in deep darkness, and do service to three or four only, when you might benefit all mankind, if you would communicate in the market-places what might be of use to all, in order that all might be able to take a part in a better and a happier life?"

In order properly to judge of *these* Alexandrians, we must pay due regard to their relation to the various parties, with which they had to contend. On the one hand, they must defend their religion and its documents, which they constantly regarded with reverence, against Jewish and heathen scoffers. This apologetic strife might induce them to penetrate more deeply into the essence of their religion, and the spirit of their Old Scriptures, while they endeavoured to oppose the prejudices of the heathen against them. Hence they might become more free in their own mode of thinking and their own notions, from this very circumstance, that they were obliged to take up a strange position, and from that position endeavour to contemplate the ideas of their own religion. But as it is universally so difficult for men to keep exactly the right path between the two opposite faults of an abrupt and narrow-minded rejection of every strange impression, and a too great facility in accepting them, these men, while they wished to prove the excellence of their religion to Greeks of education, and especially of a philosophical education, on their own ground, might also easily have been led to introduce into their Old Holy Scriptures some notions foreign to them, and to forget the peculiar, practical spirit of those writings, which differ so decidedly from all other religious and philosophical dispensations. This, at least, happened; they wished to prove to the Greeks, that their Holy Scriptures harmonized with the spirit of the Platonic philosophy, by which they themselves were governed, and that they

[9] This emphatic warning appears to indicate that already many of the Jews might have allowed themselves to be seduced by the pomp of the mysteries. [There is an able chapter on the mysticism of the Alexandrian school in Heinroth's work on Mysticism.—H. J. R.]

were the richest source of all philosophical notions. They were, therefore, obliged, although it was decidedly not their intention, to do violence to the Scriptures, in order to be able to find in them something which was entirely foreign to their nature. This would soon conduct them to a false Hermeneutic. And they became still more enamoured of the character of this false Hermeneutic, while they were opposing another and a contrary false tendency of the theological and religious mind among their countrymen, which certainly contributed much to render the Jewish religion contemptible in the eyes of the heathen. There were men who fancied that they were to understand, in a gross and sensual acceptation, the things of the Spirit, which are revealed under the covering of human language, and hence degraded the spiritual into the sensual; they lost themselves in petty refinements about the letter of the Holy Scriptures, which they might have avoided, could they have perceived the spirit in the letter; and while they did not distinguish the anthropopathical images, in which Divine things were brought down to man's understanding in the childhood of human nature, (and, to say the truth, in regard to the Divine nature, we always remain, in this life, as children, we can only conceive, think, and speak as children,) from the ideas which are enveloped in these images, they fell into many misconceptions of God, and of that which belongs to God, which were some of them injurious in a practical point of view. These are those zealots, "so [1] conceited at their own hair-splitting in the literal interpretation of Scripture," whose sensual anthropopathical representation of God and Divine things, Philo [2] so often combats. Opposing this sense-bound, literal mode of interpretation, the Alexandrians declared it the loftiest problem of interpretation, in the letter to recognise the hidden spirit, and to free it from this covering. In order however, said they, to be able to perceive this spirit, we need a spiritual, religious habit of mind, capable of understanding it, and akin to the Divine nature [3]; and the errors of those sensuous interpreters of

[1] οἱ της ῥητης πραγματειας σοφισται λιαν τας ὀφρυς ἀνεσπακοτες. De Somniis, 580.

[2] See for instance, de Plantat. Nöe, 219, where, in speaking of the representations such people form to themselves from their sensual mode of interpreting Scripture, he says, των ἀνθρωπομορφον ἐτι τε και ἀνθρωποπαθες το αἰτιον εἰσαγοντων ἐπ' εὐσεβειας και ὁσιοτητος καθαιρεσει μεγαλων ἀρετων ἐκθεσμοτατα ὀντα εὑρηματα.

[3] By means of the νοερον πνευματικον in us, we can understand the νοητον, θειον, which is enveloped in the αἰσθητοις, σαρκικοις of the Holy Scripture.

the Bible came from this very cause, that they are without this habit of mind, and are so utterly enthralled by what is sensuous. It was certainly judicious to call the attention of those sensuous-minded men, in the first instance, to that which, within their own hearts, opposed a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures—for they might be impelled by this means to turn themselves to the Spirit, "which maketh free," which alone was able to free their minds from this veil. Philo was also well aware, that without being enlightened from a higher source, man can never arrive at understanding that which is Divine. He was far from the imagination, that man could, by the employment of his own powers, purify that part of his nature which is akin to the Divine, and by that means alone, acquire for himself a knowledge of Divine things. "Every movement of the spirit, (tending towards God,)" says he, (de Migrat. Abraham. 414.) "without divine grace, (ἀνευ θειας ἐπιφροσυνης,) is pernicious, and it is better to remain here below, and wander about amidst mortal life, like the rest of the human race, than wishing to raise ourselves up to heaven, to fall by pride." [p. 283, Ed. Turneb.] Justly, indeed, does Philo remark, that as man consists of spirit and of sense, in regard to both of these, that there are two kinds of that conceit which thinks it can dispense with God—the idolatry of sensuality, and the idolatry of reason that is left to itself, and gives itself out as self-sufficing[4]. "Never must we believe," says he, (de Somniis, 1111.) "that man himself is in a condition to purify his life, which is full of stains, without God's grace." But, although it cannot be denied that Philo points to God as the source of enlightenment and sanctification, yet it is also certain that he directs our attention more to the necessity of an illumination of the reason, than to that of a complete practical change in the heart; that he did not speak enough of the nature of this practical change, and did not enough show that all illumination in Divine matters can and must proceed only from practical grounds; and this deficiency is in exact harmony with that exclusively prevalent contemplative spirit of his in religion, of which we shall shortly have occasion to speak.

Without that inward sense indeed, enlightened through the Spirit of God, that which is Divine in the holy Scripture cannot be comprehended; but the enlightening by the Spirit of God by no means excludes the use of those natural and human means,

[4] οἱ τε του νου θιασωται και των αἰσθησεων, οἱ μεν ἐκεινον, οἱ δε ταυτην θεοπλαστουσιν. De Victim. Offer. ib. 858.

which are requisite to the understanding of any writings whatever, nor does it make them at all superfluous; but, on the contrary, it rather sets them forth as necessary conditions, because the mind, enlightened by God's Spirit, can then first rightly quicken and conduct the use of these human means. But to that carnal pride, which, with an unenlightened mind, would think to have eternal life in the bare letter of Scripture, there was opposed another kind of pride, which made little enough of the letter, and which, by means of immediate illuminations, expected to be able universally to understand the spirit of Scripture without the use of natural and human means. This sort of pride, despising most haughtily the assistance and the rules of logical and grammatical interpretation, was necessarily the source of much self-deceit, and must have punished itself by itself. Where, through simple remarks on the logical connection of the context, and through observance of the Hebrew-Greek idiom, many difficulties in the translation current at Alexandria, in which Philo read the Old Testament, might have been very easily removed, Philo overlooked the simplest ways, and sought deep mysteries in places where there was not the slightest trace of them[5]. And, therefore, as these Alexandrians did not show proper regard to the letter of the Scripture, as they had no perception of the just relation of the spirit to the letter, they were on that account more likely to run the risk, instead of deducing the spirit of Scripture from itself, of introducing into it a spirit foreign to its nature, but one by which they were captivated in consequence of their peculiar philosophical habits of mind. Instead of constantly keeping close to the practical aim of the theocratic plan; instead of forming men to a God-devoted life, of representing to them God as Creator, Governor, and Law-giver; and instead of referring every thing in Scripture to this, the highest aim of the Divine revelations, they attributed to them, as their highest purpose, one foreign to their nature, and borrowed from the Platonic philosophical religion: namely, to impart general speculative ideas (*τα νοητα*) to those who were capable of receiving them. They formed for themselves, in consequence, an idealism in Judaism, similar to that of the new Platonic school of religious

[5] A remarkable instance of this occurs in his treatise, Quis rer. div. hæres? p. 492, (p. 334, Ed. Turneb.) where the phrase *ἐξαγειν ἐξω* strikes Philo, and he searches for a peculiar and profound sense in the addition *ἐξω*.

philosophers in heathenism, except that they thoroughly recognised the difference between the historical part of the Old Testament, and the myths of heathenism. Still they considered the historical part and the letter, only as a covering for those general ideas, which it was the loftiest purpose of the Divine revelations to communicate to men of a spiritual turn; but yet they still altogether decided upon the objective reality and truth of the history and the letter, and ascribed indeed to both their use, as a means of moral and religious improvement for those, who were unable to lift themselves up to that height of speculation and contemplation. Only in certain places, where they found things which they could not make to square with their religious philosophy, where they entered into controversy with the sense-bound interpreters of the Bible, (who, it must be confessed, by taking even the minutest matters literally, fell into many very crude notions, as, for instance, in the history of Paradise, and of the fall of man,) they were unable to keep close to this general principle, that the Spirit always appeared clothed in a real body. Instead of acknowledging an objective fact of deep importance for the development of the whole nature of man, in the symbolical language of the ancient traditions; they saw only a general idea clothed in a mystical dress. Here they considered the letter of the narration only as a fable, entirely devoid of all historical truth (το ῥητον μυθωδες ἐστι, according to Philo). And this they reconciled thus with their principles: in order that spiritual men should not be induced to hold entirely by the bare letter, without searching for the idea enveloped in the covering of the letter, some means of exciting their attention must be resorted to by scattering about a few places, in which the letter gives no reasonable sense (τα σκανδαλα της γραφης, ἀφορμαι τοις τυφλοις την διανοιαν). This principle naturally admitted of a great laxity and caprice in its application, and might perhaps lead to this result, that every one would allow only exactly so much of the Scripture to hold good, as he could comfortably reconcile with his own subjective habits of thought, although Philo was most undoubtedly very desirous to keep up all respect for the holy Scripture. But this is the manner in which a speculative or contemplative pride punishes itself, which despises history and the letter, while it fancies itself capable of knowing every thing *à priori*.

Philo was perfectly right in combating the sensuous *anthropo-*

pathism of those Jewish rabbis; but here, as it often happens, in avoiding one error, he fell into another of an opposite character, by mistaking and overlooking the objective and real truths, which were at the ground-work of that *anthropopathical* form, in which they were delivered,—a form necessary, not only to the multitude (τοις πολλοις) but to man as man, who can only contemplate the Divine under the analogy, refined indeed and ennobled, but still the analogy, of the human.

Philo suggests the enquiry: How can Moses attribute to God who is far above all parties and changes, anger, zeal, and other similar human things? and he answers: Moses has here, like a wise law-giver, let himself down so as to meet the wants of rude sense-led men, incapable of the contemplation of pure truth, who must at first be restrained from evil by the fear of punishment. "Let all such persons, therefore," says he, "learn those false things, by which they may be profited, if they are unable to be amended by truth; for the most approved physicians dare not tell the truth to those who are dangerously ill, because they know that this will depress them, and the disease will gain strength[6]." Philo here did not remember, that the fear of punishment can at most only restrain the open outbreak of vice, while the man remains untouched by that true inward sanctification of the heart, which religion is meant to impart. Like those heathen Platonizers, he did not consider that the Old Testament notion of God's anger contains a great truth represented in human language, the truth of the reality of sin and guilt, the objective opposition of evil and God's holiness, a truth to which the voice of the conscience bears witness in the soul of the philosopher, and of the man of highly cultivated mind in a human sense, as well as in the souls of the so-called uncultivated multitude. In the conscience of the philosopher, as well as in that of the despised multitude, the anger of God from heaven reveals itself on all unrighteousness of men (of which every one can find sufficient within himself,) who hold the truth in ungodliness; and therefore, there existed between these Idealists, who spiritualized every thing, and the Materialists, who understood every thing in a sensuous manner,—or, to use Philo's phrase, between the spiritual man and the man of mere sense,—a controversy which never could be decided, because each stuck fast to

[6] Deum. immutab. p. 302, 303. (p. 204. ed. Turneb.)

his half-truth and to the errors which he had mixed up with it. The Idealists could not bear the representation of God according to our senses. The Materialists could not bear to dilute and wash away, as mere anthropopathism, that which there was of positive in their notions, and which proved itself true in the very deepest foundations of their moral and religious conscience.

Philo, therefore, came to this, that he opposed to each other two different methods of considering God and Divine matters, as taking their origin from two different points of view, namely, the humanizing, and the not-humanizing[7] (or that in which God is represented as a man, and that in which he is not). In the first, all human qualities are attributed to God, for the advantage of those men who are to be bettered, but are still incapable of pure spiritual contemplation (προς την των πολλων διδασκαλιαν); in the other point of view, that of pure truth, all positive ideas are removed from the contemplation of God for spiritual men, who are capable of taking such a view. The being of God only, apart from all qualities, here becomes conceived by means of an immediate communion of the spirit with this great Being, and by means of an intellectual contemplation raised far above any definite ideas[8].

Philo, who explained himself (see above) so clearly against the mysteries, nevertheless brought himself here to distinguish two points of view in the knowledge of religion from each other, the esoteric and the exoteric. THERE we find an intellectual intuition[9] of God's being, which raises itself above all syllogistic[1] thought, and above all positive, historical revelation of God, but which is the first thing that teaches us to recognise the inward sense of Scripture, which is enveloped in the symbol of the letter; an allegorical interpretation of Scripture, proceeding from this point of view; a love of the Most High for himself alone, for his over-

[7] Εν μεν, ὁτι οὐχ ὡς ἀνθρωπος ὁ Θεος, ἑτερον δε, ὁτι ὡς ἀνθρωπος· l. c. p. 301. (p. 204, ed. Turneb.) Philo thought he found these two different methods in Numb. xxiii. 19, compared with Deuteronomy i. 31 : the same difference which later Christian mystics made between a θεολογια ἀποφατικη, and a θεολογια καταφατικη.

[8] Οὐδεμιᾳ των γεγονοτων ἰδεᾳ παραβαλλουσι το ὀν, ἀλλ' ἐκβιβασαντες αὐτο, ἀπο πασης ποιοτητος ψιλην ἀνευ χαρακτηρος την ὑπαρξιν καταλαμβανεσθαι, την κατα το εἰναι φαντασιαν μονην ἐνεδεξαντο, μη μορφησαντες αὐτο.

[9] [*Anschauung.* See Translator's Preface to the second volume of this work. H. J. R.]

[1] [*Diskursive.* See Preface. H. J. R.]

whelming perfection, which can dispense with all other sources of religious amendment. HERE we see an anthropopathical conception of God, as the Most High represents himself to the man of sense-led mind, by letting himself down to this point of view; an adherence to the letter of Scripture, without being able to penetrate into its inward spirit; a carnal, literal interpretation of the Bible; the hope of reward, and the fear of punishment, as springs of action and of life to man[2].

These opinions, indeed, pushed to extremes, lead to this, that we are to consider positive religion merely as a means of instruction for the multitude, which the wise man may easily dispense with, and which has no meaning as addressed to him. And they were, in fact, really pushed to extremes by many at Alexandria. "The observance of outward worship," they said, "belongs to the multitude; we, who know that all is only the symbolic garb of spiritual truth, we have all and quite sufficient in the contemplation of this truth, and need not to trouble ourselves about the outward part of religion." But the more moderate, like Philo, by means of the pure feelings of humanity within them, by their desire after religious communion, and by their reverence for the law of Moses, and the dealings of God with their people, were held back from this violent contrast to the religion of the people. Philo says of those stricter and more violent Idealists, "As if they lived for themselves alone in the desert, or as if they were souls without bodies, and knew nothing of social intercourse, they despise the faith of the multitude, and are willing only to investigate pure truth, as it is in itself, and yet the word of God ought to teach them to strive after a good name among the people, and not to violate prevailing customs, which godly men, of a higher grade than we are, have established. As men must provide for the body, which is the house of the soul, so also must they for the observance of the letter of the law. If we keep this, that also of which the letter is the symbol becomes clearer, and we escape, at the same time, blame and reproaches from the people[3]." It was natural enough, that this prevailing contemplative tendency of the religious spirit should at the same time introduce in Egypt, (afterwards the native land of the an-

[2] According to Philo the knowledge of the ὀν as ὀν, the νοητη καταληψις του ὀντος; and the knowledge of the ὀν also in the λογος, makes us υἱοι του ὀντος, and υἱοι του λογου.

[3] De Migrat. Abrah. 402.

chorite and monkish habits among Christians,) the formation of theosophic and ascetic societies, which withdrew themselves from the world. Philo himself relates that, in order to collect himself within more still and undisturbed, he had often withdrawn into the desert, but that he had learned by experience, that man does not become free from the world, which he carries about within him, by an outward withdrawal from it; nay, that just exactly in outward solitude, where the lower powers of human nature are unemployed, it has from that very cause more power to distract and afflict him. Let us hear his own words. (Leg. Allegor. B. II. p. 81, vol. i. Mangey's edition.) "I often left relations, friends, and country, and retired into the desert, that I might raise myself to worthy contemplations, but in this I did not succeed; and, on the contrary, my spirit either became distracted, or it was wounded by some impure impression. At times, however, in the midst of thousands, I find myself alone, while God represses the tumult of the soul, and teaches me, that it is not the difference of place which creates evil or good, but that it depends on God, who leads the ship of the soul whither he will." Philo felt it necessary, as he considered the union of the contemplative and of the practical life the loftiest purpose of human nature, to caution men against a partial over-estimate of the contemplative [4]. He was obliged even then to speak against those who, either from laziness or vanity, had retired into the life of ascetics and hermits, and hid their inward baseness under the appearance of holiness, like the later Christian monks. (De Profugis, 455. p. 309, ed. Turn.) "Truth may, indeed, with justice blame those who leave the occupations and trades of civil life without having tried them in their own persons, and then say, that they have despised honour and pleasures. They pretend that they despise the world, but they despise it not. A slovenly appearance and a crabbed look, a strict and sparing life, they use as baits, as if forsooth they were friends of strict manners and self-command; but they are unable to deceive deep observers, who can look at what is within, and who do not suffer themselves to be deceived by superficial appearances." Philo wished that only those who had been proved by active virtue in civil life, should pass over to the contemplative, just as the Levites were not allowed to leave the active service of the Temple before their fiftieth year.

[4] De Decalogo, p. 760.

One particular phenomenon, which resulted from this theosophico-ascetic spirit among the Alexandrian Jews, was the sect of the Therapeutæ[5]. Their head-quarters were at no great distance from Alexandria, in a quiet pleasant spot on the shores of the Lake Mœris, where they lived, like the anchorites in later periods, shut up in separate cells, (σεμνειοις, μοναστηριοις,) and employed themselves in nothing but prayer, and the contemplation of Divine things. An allegorical interpretation of Scripture was the foundation of their speculations, and they had old theosophical writings which gave them this turn. They lived only on bread and water, and accustomed themselves to fasting. They only ate in the evening, and many fasted for several days together. They met together every Sabbath-day, and every seven weeks they held a still more solemn assembly, because the number seven was peculiarly holy in their estimation. They then celebrated a simple love-feast, consisting of bread with salt and hyssop: theosophical discussions were held, and the hymns, which they had from their old traditions, were sung; and amidst choral songs, mystical dances, bearing reference to the wonderful works of God with the fathers of their people, were continued to a late hour in the night. Many men of distinguished learning have considered this sect as nothing but an *offset* of the Essenes, trained under the peculiar influence of the Egyptian spirit. But there was no such connexion between these two sects, that we should necessarily conclude the one to have been outwardly derived from the other. We do not know that the Essenes extended beyond Palestine, and the origin of the Therapeutic sect may very fairly be deduced from the peculiar theosophico-ascetic disposition of the Egyptian Jews. It has, however, been attempted to support this derivation of the one from the other, from the sameness in the meaning of their names, by deriving the Essenes from the Chaldaic אסא, *physician*, in reference to the healing either of the body or of the soul, or both;

[5] [The reader will find a most elaborate discussion on this subject (or rather on the Essenes in general) by Salmasius, in his edition of Solini Polyhistor. vol. i. p. 610; and in Calmet's Dict. of the Bible, Art. Therapeutæ. The head-quarters of the Therapeutæ are here placed near the lake Mœris. The word in German is Möris-see, which, as far as I can see from Mannert (Geographie der Griechen und Römer), can only be so translated. From Brucker, Hist. Philosoph. vol. ii. p. 780, and from the original passage in Philo de Vita Contemplativa, p. 892, (or in Mangey's Edit. vol. ii. p. 784, and Turneb. p. 611.) I am inclined to believe that the spot was on the marshy lake of Mareatis, which was close to Alexandria.—H. J. R.]

and Philo himself deduces the name of the Therapeutæ from the θεραπεια της ψυχης, although certainly the other derivation, which Philo gives, is more consonant to the Alexandrian theosophic idiom, namely, from θεραπεια του Θεου, *the true spiritual worship of God*, making them thus, θεραπευται του Θεου—του ὀντος : the worshippers of God, κατ' ἐξοχην, men who dedicate their whole lives to the worship of God in the spirit, and to the contemplation of God[6]. What Philo says, that the sect of Therapeutæ had spread much among the Hellenes and the Barbarians, is well worthy of remark, not as if the members of this particular sect of Therapeutæ had been thus dispersed, but as if that general theosophical and ascetic disposition, from which the Therapeutæ derived their origin, had many supporters among the Jews in other districts. Many of the seven Jewish sects, whose names only remain to us, may have derived their origin from this very disposition.

If, from this representation of the religious tendencies of the Jews, we attempt to deduce the result which they would give, as to the reception of Christianity, we shall immediately observe, that with the greater part of the Jewish people, the most serious obstacles to their capability of receiving the Gospel arose from their carnal disposition, which was anxious to use the heavenly as a means of obtaining the earthly, from the want of an heartfelt thirst for moral and religious things, and from their reliance on their unalienable birth-right, as the children of Abraham according to the flesh, and on the merits and sanctifying power of their ceremonial law. It might easily happen, that where men of this cast, moved by some momentary impressions, embraced Christianity, they should err again in their faith, and fall away again from Christianity, because they did not find their carnal expectations instantly realized, and because, with their carnal hearts, they were unable to receive the witness of the Spirit for Jesus, as the Messiah. And, even if they remained outwardly Christians, they were never taken by the true spirit of the Gospel; they conceived Christianity itself in a carnal manner, mixing it up with all their Jewish imaginations, and they made

[6] We frequently find in Philo expressions of this sort, which are synonymous—Γενος θεραπευτικον, γενος ἱκετικον, γενος ὁρατικον, ὁ Ισραηλ—ἀνηρ ὁρων τον Θεον. —De Victim. Offerentib. 854. Ἱκεται και θεραπευται του ὀντως ὀντος.—De Monarchia, 816. Ἀνδρος ἱκετου και φιλοθεου· Θεον μονον θεραπευειν ἀξιουντος.—De Decalogo, 760.—Οἱ πολλα χαιρειν φρασαντες ταις ἀλλαις πραγματειαις, ὁταν ἀνεθεσαν τον βιον θεραπειᾳ Θεου.—Lib. iii. de Vita Mosis, 681. Το θεραπευτικον αὐτου (του Θεου) γενος.

merely a new sort of *opus operatum* of faith in Christ, without its having any influence on their inward life. These were men who, as Justin Martyr says, in his Dialogue with Trypho, deceived themselves, by supposing that, even though they were sinners, yet if they merely acknowledged God [7], the Lord would not impute their sins to them, the hypocrites against whom St. Paul often speaks, and the mere professors of Christianity, such as we find in the churches to which St. James wrote. It was from this cause that, as Justin Martyr (Apol. II. p. 88, or Apol. I. § 68. ed. Grabe,) says, Christianity found more and more faithful converts (πλειονας και ἀληθεστερους Χριστιανους) among the multitude of the heathens, who had less grounds for religious trust, and with whom Christianity must have utterly contradicted all their then notions of religion, than it did among the multitude of the Jews. There were, however, as the Gospel history tells us, many upright men, many who, although they expected in the Messiah the founder of a visible kingdom which should appear with outward tokens, yet had a purely spiritual notion of the happiness of this kingdom, and thought its happiness would consist in an inward communion with God, and the universal dominion of good; men who acknowledged, that a general purification and the healing of moral evil must precede the foundation of this kingdom, and they expected these effects from the Messiah. Such hearts might in Jesus recognise that Son of God, whom they longed for, and once given up to Him, might be made free by the influence of his Spirit. And those also, in whom a carnal mind prevailed, and yet not to the utter extinction of all capability of higher impressions, those in whom hitherto there had only been wanting the means of awakening moral and religious desires, might be led to the Son by the hand of the Father, when they had once seen before them the visible coming of the Son of God and had heard his voice, or even if He spoke to them by the preaching of the Gospel without their seeing Him; and thus, as they received the Son without prejudices, their whole habits of thought and their heart might then be spiritualized.

When we estimate the effects of the different habits of thought among the Jewish theologians, we find that the Gospel could not find any point of union with a system like Sadduceeism, a cold system, which, shut up within itself, extinguished all desires of a

[7] Some such pretended acknowledgment of God, as that against which St. John contends in his first Epistle.

more lofty nature. The Gospel might, indeed, work its way to man, even through the covering of Sadduceeism, just as elsewhere; but then the conversion must have been one which his previous habits had no share in preparing, and, on that account, since no point of union, no point of transition appears between the two systems, we cannot think of any mixture of Sadducee and Christian notions. If it be suggested that such a mixture may have taken place in certain opponents of the doctrine of the resurrection in the apostolic age, we must say that this has been supposed without sufficient reason, because the appearance which it attempts to account for may be deduced from totally different grounds [8].

With the Pharisees, in general, the obstacles to an acceptance of the Gospel, were their pride, their belief in their own righteousness, and their want of sincerity. We must here accurately distinguish between the two classes of Pharisees which we remarked above. To those who, although they deceived themselves, did really strive, in some sense, truly after holiness, at length some light of the Spirit might make plain the nothingness of those means, by which they sought to attain it, the covering of their inward corruption might disappear before the power of truth, and their desire after holiness might now become a road to lead them to Christianity. The painful struggle, which St. Paul describes from his own experience in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, might be gone through by them, and bring them into a stedfast quietness of belief. But those Pharisees, who came over to Christianity without any such excitement of the inward man, might fall into the temptation of melting down and uniting their former Pharisaic notions with Christianity, and not recognise Jesus as their Redeemer, in the full sense of the term, because they still trusted in their righteousness of works.

Among the Essenes and other similar mystics, the striving after inward religion might lead them to Christianity, but yet in their contemplative life they would, perhaps, take the appearance for the reality, and think they had more than they really had; moving round and round in one narrow circle of ideas and feelings, they were likely to mistake the true business and the true wants of their nature, and to reject all which did not suit

[8] The intermixture of certain philosophic or theosophic notions of the Jews or Greeks with the Gospel.

that narrow circle, or which threatened to take them out of it. To become poor in spirit was often for men like these the hardest trial, for it compelled them to renounce the belief they cherished of their own intellectual and spiritual perfection. They were the less able to determine on renouncing their outward demeanour and observances, because these were closely connected with their whole mystical religious system; and men of such sects, although their inward religious feelings might be attracted by Christianity, would find it hard to practise such self-denial as utterly to renounce the whole of their former notions, and entirely give themselves up to the new birth under the Gospel. A kind of mixture of their earlier theosophy with the simple truths of Christianity might easily take its rise among them; and be the source of many sects which adulterated Christianity, the seeds of which we see already alluded to in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians, and in the Pastoral Epistles.

Among the Alexandrian Jews the reception of the Gospel was not hindered by the political and temporal expectation of the Messiah, nor by many other prejudices which prevailed among the other Jews. We must not, however, immediately conclude that these Alexandrian Jews were free from all the common Jewish expectations, however much these expectations were spiritualized by them. Even Philo believed that the Temple of Jerusalem, and the temple worship, were destined to remain for ever [9]. Even Philo believed, that had the Jews once turned to God in any signal manner, they would have been at once, by a miracle from heaven, brought back from all the people, among whom they had been scattered and prisoners, and that then, in virtue of their piety, which would command reverence, they would remain unattacked by their enemies or victorious over them, and that a golden age would come forth from Jerusalem. The spiritual tendency of their religious feelings might here make men more capable of accepting Christianity, and Christianity might engraft itself on their attempts to oppose the carnal and literal interpretation of the Bible, and to penetrate its inward sense and spirit. Christianity might announce itself as a Gnosis which had first unfolded the true spirit of the Old Testament. Christianity showed that the golden age which the Alexandrian Jews expected, had already appeared in spirit, and

[9] De Monarchia, 822.

being prepared in spirit, would at some time or other appear also openly to their view. The letter of an Alexandrian Jew, converted to Christianity, which has been ascribed to Barnabas, gives us an instance, how the religious notions of Alexandria might become a point of communication and prove a means of conversion to Christianity. There were in these notions many other religious ideas, which would be realized by Christianity. But just as the religious idealism of the Alexandrian school might be attracted by that which is ideal in Christianity, so also on the other hand, the diminution of the realistic principle in their religion might hinder the reception of the Gospel. They had no expectation[1] of a personal Messiah, which had disappeared even among many other Jews, who had received an Hellenistic education, like Josephus, and there was wanting, therefore, an essential ground for Christianity to fasten on. With those of the Alexandrian school, as with those mystics, it might happen, that in their proud religious philosophy they shut themselves up against all new religious impressions, and by their partial, contemplative, and speculative disposition of the heart and spirit, deceiving themselves about the true condition and the real wants of their nature, they tried to become poor in spirit. It might, therefore, happen that although men of this cast were attracted by what Christianity offers of an ideal kind, they could not conquer themselves so as to become *simple* and single-hearted through Christianity and in Christianity. They wished to melt down their religious philosophy and amalgamate it with Christianity; they wished, even in Christianity, to keep their own superiority, and to introduce into the Christian Church the distinction between an esoteric and exoteric religion, against which the very essence of the Gospel, uniting all men through the communion of a higher life, entirely protests,—a distinction which afterwards became the source of so many errors. Thus in the spiritual and idealistic, as well as in the carnal and realistic, spirit of this age, we cannot but observe many obstacles to Christianity, and many grounds for it to work upon, and also many causes which threatened to adulterate its purity by the admixture of stranger elements.

Among the wonderful dealings of God, by which the coming

[1] We are not, however, justified in concluding that all the Jews of the Alexandrian school thought with Philo on this subject.

of Christianity was prepared, must be placed the spreading of the Jews among the Greeks and Romans. Those among them who belonged to the Pharisees gave themselves much trouble to obtain proselytes; and the loss of respect for the old popular religion, and the unsatisfied religious wants of multitudes, furthered their views. Reverence for the national God of the Jews, as a mighty Being, and reverence for the secret sanctuary of the splendid Temple of Jerusalem, had long gained admittance among the heathen. Jewish Goetæ (enchanters, jugglers, &c.) permitted themselves to make use of a thousand acts of delusion, in which they were very skilful, to make an impression of astonishment on the minds of those around them. Confidence in Judaism had in consequence made such wide progress, especially in large capital towns, that the Roman writers in the time of the first emperors openly complain of it, and Seneca in his book upon superstition, said of the Jews—"The conquered have given laws to the conquerors[2]." The Jewish proselyte-makers, blind leaders of the blind, who had themselves no conception of the real nature of religion, could give to others no insight into it. They often allowed their converts to take up a kind of dead monotheism, and merely exchange one kind of superstition for another; they taught them, that by the mere outward worship of one God, and outward ceremonials, they were sure of the grace of God, without requiring any change of life, and they gave to them only new means of silencing their conscience, and new support in the sins which they were unwilling to renounce; and hence our Saviour reproached these proselyte-makers, that they made their converts ten times more the children of hell, than they themselves were. But we must here accurately distinguish between the two classes of proselytes. The proselytes in the strict sense of the word, the proselytes of righteousness, who underwent circumcision and took upon themselves the whole of the ceremonial law, were very different from the proselytes of the gate, who only bound themselves to renounce idolatry, to the worship of the one God, and to abstinence from all heathenish excess, as well as from every thing which appeared to have any connection with idolatry[3]. The

[2] Victoribus victi leges dederunt.

[3] The so-called seven precepts of Noah. [Some remarks on the precepts of Noah will be found in Dr. Lardner's Remarks on Dr. Ward's Dissertations. Dr. Lardner contends that there was only one kind of Proselytes. Lardner's Works, in 4to, vol. v. H. J. R.]

former often embraced all the fanaticism and superstition of the Jews, and allowed themselves to be blindly led by their Jewish teachers. The more difficult it had been to them, to subject themselves to the observance of the Jewish ceremonial law, necessarily so irksome to a Greek or a Roman, the less could they find it in their hearts to believe, that all this had been in vain, that they had obtained no advantage by it, and that they must renounce their presumed holiness. What Justin Martyr says to the Jews, Dial. cum Tryph. 350, holds good of these proselytes: "The proselytes not only do not believe, but they calumniate the name of Christ twice as much as you, and they wish to murder and torture us who believe on Him, because they are desirous to resemble you in every thing." The proselytes of the gate, on the contrary, had taken many of the most admirable truths out of Judaism, without becoming entirely Jews, they had become acquainted with the Holy Scriptures of the Jews, they had heard of the promised messenger from God, of the King armed with power from God, of whom a report had been spread, as Suetonius says in the life of Vespasian, c. iv. over the whole of the East. Much of that which they had heard from their Jewish teachers, whose writings they had read, had remained dark to them, and they were still to seek in them. By the notions which they had received from the Jews, of one God, of the Divine government of the world, of God's judgment, and of the Messiah, they were more prepared for the Gospel than other heathens, and because they still thought that they had too little, because they had no determined religious system, and were curious after more instruction in Divine things, and because they had not received many of the prejudices which swayed the Jews; they were more fitted to receive the Gospel than many of the Jews. From the very beginning they must have been attentive to the preaching of the Gospel, which secured to them, without making them Jews, a full share in the fulfilment of those promises, of which the Jews had spoken to them. To these proselytes of the gate, (the φοβουμενοι τον Θεον, the Εὐσεβεις of the New Testament,) passed, therefore, according to the Acts, the preaching of the Gospel, when it had been rejected by the blinded Jews; and here the seed of the Divine word found a fitting soil in hearts desirous of holiness. There were, however, doubtless, among the proselytes of the gate, some who, wanting in proper earnestness in their search after religious

truth, only desired, in every case, an easy road to heaven, which did not require any self-denial; and who, in order to be sure of being on the safe side, whether power and truth lay with the Jews or the heathens, sometimes worshipped in the synagogue of Jehovah, sometimes in the temples of the gods, and who, therefore, fluttered in suspense between Judaism and heathenism [4].

SECTION I.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF CHRISTIANITY WITH REGARD TO THE UNBELIEVING WORLD.

I. *Propagation of Christianity.*

II. *A general view of the Propagation of Christianity, of the obstacles which opposed it, and of the means and causes by which it was furthered.*

CHRISTIANITY, being by its nature only a spiritual religion and only the establishment of a kingdom which is not of this world, is by no means necessarily dependent on any outward worldly circumstances. It can, therefore, find equally free access to men living under institutions and notions the most widely different, and incorporate itself with them, provided they contain nothing which is immoral. This peculiar character of Christianity must always render its propagation more easy wherever, as in its earlier days, the preachers of the Gospel, well aware of its spiritual nature, abstain from intermeddling in the affairs of this world. That Christianity is calculated to enter into all earthly forms of life and relations, and yet raise man by its spiritual influence above the affairs in which he is engaged, is expressly stated by a Christian [5] of the early part of the second century, when speaking of the life of his fellow Christians. "The Christians," says he, "are not separated from other men, either in their earthly abode,

[4] Such were the persons painted by Commodianus in his Instructiones, the inter utrumque viventes.

Inter utrumque putans dubie vivendo cavere
Nudatus a lege decrepitus luxu procedis?
Quid in synagogo decurris ad Pharisæos,
Ut tibi misericors fiat, quem denegas ultro?
Exis inde foris, iterum tu fana requiris.

[5] The author of the letter to Diognetus.

nor by language, nor customs; they never inhabit separate towns, they use no peculiar speech, no singular mode of life.—They dwell in the towns of Greeks, or of Barbarians, just as chance has assigned their abode, and inasmuch as they follow the customs of the country with regard to raiment, food, and other such matters, they show a temper and conduct which is wonderful and remarkable to all men. They obey the existing laws, nay, they triumph over the laws by their own conduct." But as Christianity incorporates itself with every thing that is pure in human nature, so must it, on the contrary, struggle most decidedly with all that is ungodly in mankind, and with all that has any connexion and relation to ungodliness. Christianity declared itself as a power which should work a reformation in man, and form his character anew, while the world endeavoured to maintain its old ungodly ways. The old man struggled every where against the new creation, and to this did the saying of Christ relate: "I came not to send peace upon the world, but a sword," the sword of the Spirit; and history has fully verified this prophecy in the workings of Christianity among mankind. Christianity, from its very beginning, was opposed on many points to the prevailing opinions, as well as to many of the ruling customs and inclinations which the spirit of a holy religion could not tolerate. Besides this, the Pagan state-religion was so closely interwoven with civil and social life, that whatever attacked the state religion must necessarily come into hostile contact with the different relations of civil and social life. This struggle might indeed have been partially avoided, had the early Church, like the Churches of later days, been inclined to humour the world, had they at least accommodated themselves to the prevailing manners, even when opposed to Christianity, merely to obtain more followers. But the first Christians were far more inclined to a haughty abomination of every thing heathen, and even of that which had merely an apparent connexion with Paganism, than to any thing like a lax accommodation; and certainly, for the preservation of the purity, both of Christian life and doctrines, any excess on this side was far safer than on the other. The religion, then, which had to combat such deep-rooted notions and manners, which threatened to shake to pieces that which was fast and firmly established by its antiquity,—this religion, I say, came from a people, despised for the most part by the civilized world; it found, at first, its readiest acceptance among

the lower classes; and this was of itself a sufficient reason to the Romans and the Greeks, proud as they were of their superior cultivation, to look down with contempt upon it. They recognised as yet nothing but THE SUPERSTITION OF THE PEOPLE, and the RELIGION OF THE PHILOSOPHER. How could, then, man have hoped, in those days, to learn more in the market-places than in the schools of the philosophers? Celsus[6], the first writer against Christianity, makes it a matter of mockery, that labourers, shoe-makers, farmers, the most uninformed and clownish of men, should be zealous preachers of the Gospel, and that they (especially the first) chiefly addressed themselves to women and children. Of a religion for all mankind, these persons, proud of their own civilization, who would have nothing in common with the mass of the people, had no conception whatever. It was their constant reproach against Christianity, that it required only a blind belief (πιστιν ἀλογον); they demanded philosophical grounds for what was said.

It may, perhaps, be urged, that the old popular religions had been already once shaken by the assault of unbelief, and had now lost all their authority. There is some truth in this; but on the other hand, we must consider well that men had betaken themselves, with a renewed fanaticism, to their old religions, and hence arose the bloody combat for their maintenance. The cruel rage of the populace against the Christians, bespeaks decidedly a religious character among the people; and probably superstition, called forth by the opposition of scepticism, now more than ever ruled the people, and some portion of the educated world. With regard to the greater part of persons in those days under the influence of superstition, Plutarch justly makes use of the saying of Heraclitus about the dreamers of the night,— "They found themselves awake in open day, in a world of their own:" a world which was closed to all beams of reason and truth. Men of carnal minds, who wished to see their gods with their own eyes, who had been accustomed to carry about with them their gods, either in signets or in little images, to which they generally attributed the power of amulets; how often did men of this stamp cry out to the Christians, "Show us your God!" and to men like this, a spiritual religion, which brought with it no worship, no temples, no victims, no images, and no

[6] In Origen. c. Cels. III. 149.

altars, appeared so bare and cold, that the heathen often made it a matter of bitter reproach.

There was, however, as we have above remarked, a spirit of enquiry, and of longing after new communications of heaven, shed abroad in this century; with all the obstinate clinging to the old religion, there were yet manifold capacities at hand for new religious impressions. But this longing, which hardly well acquainted with its own objects and aim, was only led by the blind impulse of feeling, might easily be deceived, and easily be the occasion of every kind of delusion. Celsus, indeed, already imagined that he could illustrate the rapid propagation of Christianity from the fact, that in this time so many enchanters, (Goeten, Greek Γοηται,) who endeavoured to deceive by the exhibition of supernatural powers, found a ready belief among many, and for the moment excited a great sensation, which of course soon subsided again. There was, however, as Origen justly represented in reply to Celsus, a great difference in the manner which those persons used, from that made use of by the preachers of the Gospel. Those deceivers flattered the sinful inclinations of men, and forming themselves upon their then habits of thinking, they required no sacrifices from their followers of any thing dear to them. On the contrary, he who, in the earlier ages, would become a Christian, must tear himself away from many of his darling passions, and be ready to sacrifice every thing for his faith. Tertullian[7] says, that more persons were deterred from embracing Christianity from fear of losing their pleasures, than from the danger with which their life was threatened. The influence which such enchanters exerted on the people, was a new hindrance to the operation of Christianity. It was obliged now to reach the hearts and spirits of men, through the delusions with which these impostors had invested the conscience of man; the examples of a Simon Magus, an Elymas, an Alexander of Abonoteichos, show us how this sort of men opposed the reception of Christianity. Visible miracles were needed to detach persons from the influence of such deceptions, to arrest their attention, and to make them capable of higher impressions. The examples from the Acts, (ch. viii.) of the manner in which the disciples of Simon Magus were withdrawn from him, and from ch. xiii. of the way in which the conversion of Sergius

[7] De Spectaculis, c. 2.

Paulus was prepared; so many proofs from the Acts, of the means by which the attention of the superstitious multitude was attracted to the preachers of the Gospel, prove clearly, that the miracles effected what the inward power of the Holy Word, for which these miracles first paved the way to men's hearts, never could have effected—or at least, not so quickly, without the aid of these miracles. Through these signs and tokens, for a time, the Spirit of God supported the preaching of the Gospel, and many thus were conducted through outward things to inward things, and through the Corporeal to the Spiritual. The Fathers often appeal to such appearances in the language of truth, and even before heathens themselves; and even he who discriminates the fact from the views with which it is brought forward, must nevertheless recognise its existence and its influence on the consciences of men. It is, therefore, undeniable, that the spreading of the Gospel was furthered by such means. Let us represent to ourselves some of these circumstances, in lively connection with the nature and circumstances of those times. A Christian meets with an unhappy man, blindly possessed by the superstitions of heathenism, who, being sick in body and mind, has in vain hoped to obtain a cure, both in the temple of Æsculapius, where so many expected a cure by means of dreams sent by the god of health[8], and from the multifarious incantations and amulets of the heathen priests and dealers in enchantment. The Christian exhorts him no longer to seek for help from feeble and dead gods; (or, according to the then prevalent opinion of Christians, at the hands of evil spirits;) but to turn to the Almighty God, and to trust in Him, who alone can help. He hears those who pray to Him in the name of Him by whom He has redeemed the world from sin. The Christian introduces no magic formulæ, no amulets; but, calling on God through Christ, he lays his hand on the head of the sick man, in firm and faithful reliance on his Saviour. The sick man is healed, and the cure of his body leads to that of his soul. There were besides, in these times of ferment, when the bonds of spiritual and moral life were torn in sunder, a multitude of persons, sick in body and in mind, who found their inward spirits utterly convulsed—persons who felt themselves seized by a strange power, to which their wills were subjected, and blindly impelled hither and thither, they

[8] See the Orations of Aristides.

were agitated by an anxiety of which they could give no just account. All the powers, therefore, of darkness and destruction would bestir themselves, where the power of healing godliness ought to enter, and distraction in man's nature, with all its terrible consequences, would naturally there ensue, and rise to the highest pitch, where in man's nature, the peace of heaven, which brings all things into harmony, ought to be revealed. The unhappy man believed himself possessed by evil spirits, and it was then the usually received opinion, that they were the cause of such convulsions. There were many among the heathens and Jews, who pretended, through the means of incense, anointings, simples, amulets, and invocations of the evil spirits, in enigmatical and high-sounding forms of words, to be able to exorcise them. Sometimes such means as had a natural efficacy in healing, sometimes such as, through power over the imagination, which has such influence in these cases, cured the patient of his fancy for the moment, or repressed it by promises for the future. In every case these people only did injury, while they strengthened men in their superstition, and in their whole course of ungodly existence; while they fought against the kingdom of lies only by the power of lies, and drove out one evil spirit by another. Their imposture was unable to touch the inward source of evil, which lay deeper, and by which alone any real cure could be effected. Our Saviour said of such cases:—"How shall one go into a strong man's house and rob him of his goods, unless he first bind the strong man, and then rob his house[9]?" How much credit such exorcists then obtained, we may judge from the thanks which Marcus Aurelius offers up to the gods, because he had been taught by a philosopher not to trust those tales of incantations and exorcisms which were related of miracle-workers and Gœtæ[1]. An unhappy man of this kind, after seeking help in vain at the hands of these impostors, comes to a Christian; the Christian considers him possessed, and feels himself by no means called upon to enquire more precisely into the actual cause of the malady. He knows that his Redeemer had overcome the power of the prince of this world, and that to him all the powers of evil must yield, in what way soever they show themselves. He

[9] The power of evil over the inmost heart of man must first be broken, and then the individual workings of this evil will cease of themselves.

[1] I. 6. Το ἀπιστητικον τοις ὑπο των τερατευομενων και γοητων περι ἐπῳδων και περι δαιμονων ἀποπομπης και των τοιουτων λεγομενοις.

calls upon him, and on the power of the Holy Spirit which is in him. His prayer, which calls down the power of Heaven, works deeply on the distracted heart of the patient. Inward peace follows the turbulent tide which agitated him within; and, conducted by this experience of the influence of Christianity on himself to a belief in it, he becomes now, in every sense, for the first time freed from evil spirits, and healed through the enlightening and healing power of truth so thoroughly and for ever, that the evil spirit returns not to his house, to find it swept and garnished for him.

We may now introduce some remarkable intimations from the Fathers of this age relative to such facts. Justin Martyr, in his first Apology, (I. 45) says to the heathen, "That the reign of evil spirits has been destroyed by Jesus Christ you might ascertain from what happens before your own eyes; for many of our people, of us Christians, have healed, and still heal, many possessed by evil spirits in the whole world, as well as in your city (Rome), adjuring them by the name of Jesus Christ, whom Pontius Pilate crucified; and these were persons who could receive no relief whatever from all other exorcists." Irenæus says, (adv. Hær. lib. ii. c. 22) "In the name of Jesus Christ, his true disciples, who have received grace from him, work for the good of other men, according as each has received the gifts from him. Some cast out evil spirits, so radically and completely, that those purified from evil spirits often become, afterwards, themselves believers and members of the community; others heal the sick by the laying on of hands. Already have many even been raised from the dead, and remained among us a tolerable number of years. There are innumerable operations of grace, which the Church has received all over the world from God, and daily brings forth for the advantage of the heathen, in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, while it deludes no one, and seeks no gain; for as it has received freely from God, so does it freely give. It performs nothing by the invocation of angels, nothing through spells and other evil arts, but purely and openly, (not with hidden arts and secret mysteries, as those Gœtæ do,) it offers up its prayers to him, who has created all things, while it calls on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Origen considered these manifestations of supernatural power necessary, especially for the *first* foundation of the Church. (See

Origen c. Celsum, lib. viii. edit. Hoeschel. p. 420[2].) "It is more," says he, "through the power of miracles than through exhortation, that men became inclined to leave the religion of their country, and to take a foreign one: for if we judge from probability, taking into account the education of the first Church community, it is scarcely credible that the apostles of Jesus, unlearned and ignorant men, should have relied on any thing else, in their preaching of Christianity to mankind, than on the power which was bestowed upon them, and the grace of God, which accompanied their preaching; nor that their hearers should have suffered themselves to be detached from the habits of their country, deeply rooted in them by the revolution of ages, had not a commanding might and miracles, entirely opposed to those things among which they had been educated, induced them to become disciples." And in the seventh book of this work, he says also, "In the first times of the teaching of Jesus, and after his ascension, more visible tokens of the operations of the Holy Spirit were revealed, and in later days, fewer. There still, however, remain the traces of these operations among some few, whose souls have been purified through the Word of God, and a life corresponding to it."—Origen appeals also to circumstances of which he was an eye-witness. "Many give proofs to those who have been healed through their power, that they have attained a miraculous power through this faith, while over those who require healing, they invoke no other power than the Almighty God and Jesus Christ, together with the preaching of his Gospel. Thereby have I seen many persons rescued from severe circumstances of delirium and phrensy, and many other evils, which no man, and none of your demons, could cure[3]." And in another place Origen says these remarkable words[4]:—"Though Celsus mocks at it, yet must it be said that many are come to Christianity against their will, because some spirit, through visions which he presented to them, awake or in the dream, led their reason suddenly from hatred against Christianity to a zeal which gave even life for it. Much of this kind could we relate, which were we to set it down, although we were eye-witnesses of it, would be the source of much mockery to the unbelievers; but

[2] [The passage occurs p. 408, ed. Spencer, but it is condensed in the above translation.—T. J. R.]

[3] Lib. iii. p. 128. [p. 124, ed. Spencer.]

[4] C. Celsum, I. v. 35. [Lib. i. p. 35, ed. Spencer.]

God is the witness of our conscience, that we have never wished to spread the holy doctrines of Jesus Christ through false reports, but through many undeniable facts[5]."

Nevertheless, all outward dealings and miracles would have created for this religion no such access to the hearts of men, had it not possessed, in its inward nature, an attractive power for that in human nature, which is related to God, however it may be darkened and overwhelmed, either by false refinements or through carnal grossness[6]. They would have been unavailing, had it not shown itself victorious over all the impostures, which, taking prisoner the human mind, opposed it; had it not shown itself the only true and fundamental source of satisfaction to the religious wants excited in an age of ferment; had it not proved the only thing which would create for the spiritual world peace and tranquillity, in this wild ferment of opposing elements; and had not this religion, as soon as it had once taken root any where, by the activity which showed itself in it, been irresistibly impelled forward in its course. As the Redeemer, in his prayer, had commended the faithful to his heavenly Father, that their communion with him, the glory received from the Father, which he bestowed on them, beaming through their life, might lead men to believe on him, so it came to pass. The witness which genuine Christians gave of their Lord through their conduct, the healing power of the Gospel, which revealed itself in their life, was a most powerful engine in the conversion of the heathen. Justin Martyr appeals to this as matter of experience. (Apol. ii. p. 63; or in Grabe's Edition, Apol. i. § xx. p. 30.) After quoting the words of our Lord, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," he adds, "the Lord wills not that we should recompense evil for evil; but he requires of us, through the might of patience and gentleness, to entice all men out of the disgrace of their corrupt desires; this we can prove by many among us, who from violent and tyrannical men have become changed by a victorious might, either by observing how their neighbours could bear all things, or by perceiving the patience of their defrauded travelling companions, or in some way or other by the intercourse of life, came to be acquainted with the life of Christians." The

[5] Compare with these words of Origen what Tertullian says, de Anima, 47. Major pene vis hominum de visionibus Deum discunt.

[6] In men, hominibus ipsa urbanitate deceptis, as Tertullian says.

distinguished virtues of the Christian must then have come far more vividly in contrast with the prevailing crimes and vices. The *strictness of* Christian *virtue*, sometimes carried to excess, in contrast with an universal depravity of manners! How deep an impression in later ages, when public life had taken the form of Christianity, did the strict life of the monks make, when contrasted with the corruption which prevailed in large towns. The inward brotherly love of the Christian,—contrasted with the universal selfishness which divides all men from one another, and makes them distrustful of each other, which prevented men from understanding the nature of the Christian community, and rendered it a source of never-failing wonder to them! "See," said they, "how they love one another." "This surprised them beyond measure," says Tertullian (Apol. c. 39), "since they are accustomed to hate one another, that one man should be ready to die for another." All could not, therefore, be cold and heartless like the politicians we shall have to speak of, who, accustomed to measure every thing by their own limited measure, were only distrustful of such an union. The heart, unhardened by prejudice or fanaticism, must have been touched at the impression of such an appearance, and must have made the enquiry, 'What is it that can so bind the spirits of men together?' In a time of slavish cowardice the heroic courage of faith, with which the Christians desired death as soon as any thing against their religion was required of them, worked so powerfully on men, as an appearance quite foreign to the times, that they made this character a matter of reproach to the Christians, as a thing fitted for the heroic days of antiquity, but not for these more polished and more effeminate days[7]. Though the ordinary class of Roman politicians, though the followers of worldly love which delights in magnificence, though the cold stoic who desires demonstration in every thing, could see only a blind enthusiasm in the spirit with which Christians, who were called upon to give witness to the truth, met their death; yet the sight of the confidence and light-heartedness of suffering and dying Christians must have made an impression on many more yielding or more unprejudiced hearts, must have disarmed the prejudices against the Christians, and have called the attention of the world to that for which so many men were willing and ready to give up every thing, and

[7] Well enough suited to the ingenia duriora robustioris antiquitatis, but not to the tranquillitas pacis, and the ingenia mitiora. Tertull. ad Nat. I. c. 18.

which was able to nerve them for this sacrifice. Outward violence could effect nothing against this inward power of heavenly truth, it could only cause the might of this godly truth to be more gloriously displayed. Tertullian, therefore, closes his Apology with these words, as to the persecution of the Christians: "Therefore all the refinements of your cruelty can effect nothing, or rather they have brought over persons to this sect; our number augments, the more you persecute us. The blood of Christians is the seed they sow. Your philosophers, who exhort to the endurance of pain and death, make not so many disciples as the Christians through their deeds. That obstinacy which you upbraid us with, is an instructress. For who is not impelled, through the consideration of this, to the enquiry, what this matter can be? Who joins us not as soon as he has enquired? Who wishes not, when he has joined us, himself to suffer for truth?"

At a season, when the earthly glory of the old world was nearly at an end, when all, which had hitherto given a certain impulse to the souls of men, was growing old and fading away, Christianity appeared, and called mankind from the old fading world to the creation of a new one, destined for eternity; from the fading earthly world to an everlasting glory, which in faith and spirit they were even now capable of conceiving. Augustin says beautifully, "Christ appeared to the men of a world, which was growing old and dying, that while all around them faded away, they might receive through him a new and youthful life." And the higher life which was spread abroad by Christianity, required no glittering outward splendour, like all which man had delighted in before, to reveal its glory. This life could find an entrance, even amidst the most confined and oppressive circumstances and conditions, and let its glory shine forth in the most dishonoured and despised vessels, could elevate man above all which tends to bow him to the ground, without making him overstep the bounds which he believed a higher power had assigned to his station in the world. The slave remained in all his worldly circumstances a slave, fulfilled all his duties in that station with greater fidelity and conscientiousness than before, and yet within he felt himself free, and showed an elevation of soul, a confidence, a power of faith and devotion, which must have astonished his master. The men of the lower orders, who hitherto had known nothing of religion but its ceremonies and its fables, received hence a clear and

confident religious persuasion. The above cited remarkable words of Celsus, as well as many individual examples of the first times of Christianity, show us how often the wide spreading of the Gospel proceeded from women, who showed forth the light of the Gospel, as wives and mothers, amidst the corruption of heathen manners, from young people, from boys and girls, from slaves, who shamed their masters. "Every Christian handicraftsman," says Tertullian, (Apol. c. 46) "has found God, and shown him to thee, and can teach thee all, in fact, which thou needest to know of God, although Plato (in the Timæus) says it is difficult to find out the Creator of the Universe, and when you have found him, impossible to communicate this knowledge to the multitude." And Athenagoras says, "Among us you will find ignorant persons, handicraftsmen, and old women, who although they could not prove to you by words the healing influence of our religion, yet by their actions show the salutary power of the thoughts which it communicates, for they learn not words by heart, but they show good works; they suffer themselves to be smitten, and smite not; again, when they are robbed, they do not go to law; they give to those who ask from them, and they love their neighbour as themselves." Christianity was able to lower itself to the sensuous conceptions of those whose spirits were not calculated to receive and develop godlike things in a form suited to them; it fastened itself upon the dross of their earlier and fleshly methods of thinking, as we shall see in the notions of the Chiliasts, while they had nevertheless received the seed of an hidden and godly life, which was destined by-and-by to penetrate the whole mass of their nature, and also to form, lastly, their habits of thought. The working of Christianity in the life and sufferings of Christians, as well as isolated parts of Christian doctrine, which they heard, called at last to Christianity the attention of philosophically educated heathen, who had run through multifarious philosophical and religious systems to find religious truth, on which they might rely, and which could satisfy the wants of their hearts and spirits—and they found in Christianity what they had sought in vain elsewhere.

[B.]—*On the spreading of the Gospel in various Quarters of the World.*

THE commercial intercourse of various nations had already pointed out and paved a way for the propagation of the Gospel. The easy communication between the different parts of the vast Roman empire, the connection of the Jews, who were settled in various districts, with Jerusalem, the connection of all parts of the Roman empire with Rome, of the provinces, with their metropolitan cities, and of the greater part of the Roman empire, with the more considerable capitals, such as Alexandria, Antiochia, Ephesus, Corinth, all tended to promote this object. The latter cities, centres as they were of mercantile, political, and literary communication, became head-quarters, where the first preachers took up their abode, in order to spread their religion; and the general spirit of commercial intercourse, which from early times had never been confined to the mere exchange of earthly commodities, but had also served for the interchange of intellectual treasures, became now of service, as a means of extending a knowledge of the highest spiritual treasures. In general, the first advances were made by Christianity in towns; for, since it was of the greatest consequence at first to secure established stations for the propagation of the Gospel, it was requisite for the early preachers, in their passage through any country, to preach the Gospel at first in the cities, from which its influence might extend over the country by the exertions of the natives. On the other hand, in the country, they were likely to meet with far greater obstacles, in the general rudeness, the blind superstition, and the heathen fanaticism of the people, as well as from their ignorance in many cases of the language of the country, while in cities, for the most part, Greek and Latin were sufficiently intelligible. We know, however, from Pliny's report to Trajan, from the account of Clemens Romanus, (Ep. I. ad Corinth. § 42) and from the relation of Justin Martyr, (Apolog. II. 98) that this was not universally the case, and that in many situations country communities were formed very early; and Origen says expressly (c. Cels. iii. p. 119) "that many had made it their business to go through not only the towns, but also the villages and farms (*και κωμας και επαυλεις*)." The numerous country bishops, in insulated spots, are also a proof of this.

In the New Testament we find accounts of the spreading of Christianity in Syria, Cilicia, apparently also in the then widely extended empire of Parthia[6], in Arabia, Asia Minor, and the neighbouring districts; Greece, and the neighbouring districts, as far as Illyria, and in Italy. We are much in want of authentic accounts of the propagation of Christianity for the times that immediately succeeded; for later stories, which arose out of the endeavour to deduce every national Church from an apostolical origin, deserve no examination. We only bring forward that on which we can rely. The old story of the letters that passed between the Abgarus Uchomo, the king of the small state of Edessa, in Osrhoëne of Mesopotamia, of the dynasty of the Agbari, or Abgari, and our Saviour, whom he prayed to cure him of a severe sickness, deserves no credit, nor does that of the conversion of this Agbarus by Thaddeus, one of the seventy disciples. Eusebius found the documents, from which he penned this narration, in the archives of Edessa, and suffered himself to be deceived by them[7]. The letter of Christ is utterly unworthy of him, and bears the appearance of a cento from various passages of the Gospels. We cannot imagine either that any thing written by the Saviour himself could have remained unknown to the rest of the world till the time of Eusebius. Again, the letter of Abgarus is not composed in the style of an Oriental prince. Whether the story be in some degree founded in truth, though not true as it now stands, we have no means of determining; one thing is certain, that Christianity spread betimes into these parts, but yet the first traces of it in a prince of that country occur between 160-170, in Abgarus Bar Manu. The Christian sage Bardesanes was in high regard with him, and relates, that

[6] For the circumstance that St. Peter (1 Ep. v. 13) sends a salutation from his wife* in Babylon, whether it be the then capital of Seleucia, Ctesiphon, or more probably the old ruined Babylon, leads us to suppose that he was residing in that quarter.

[7] [The observations of Lardner, (vol. iii. p. 594, 4to ed.) and the note of Valesius on the two last chapters of Book I. of Eusebius, are well worthy of attention.—Dr. Jones maintains that the whole account in Eusebius is an interpolation. Jones on the Canon, vol. ii. p. 1—26. H. J. R.]

* ["Von seiner frau." Ita Neander. Can *seiner* be a misprint for *einer*? 'from a lady in Babylon.' The passage is ἡ ἐν Βαβυλῶνι συνεκλεκτη, which our translation renders, 'The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with *you*.' See, however, Eusebius, II. E. ii. 15, where he observes that St. Peter calls *Rome*, Babylon, and quotes this passage. Vid. Vales. in loc.—H. J. R.]

he forbad, under heavy punishments, the custom of castration for the rites of Cybele, by ordering that those who performed it should lose their hands. It certainly does not follow from this that he was a Christian, but we may remark besides, that on his coins the customary marks of the worship of Baal disappear, and are replaced by the cross [8].

If St. Peter [9] preached the Gospel in the Parthian empire, some seeds of Christianity may perhaps, in very early days, have reached Persia, which then belonged to that empire, but the frequent wars between the Romans and the Parthians would prevent communication between the Christians of those states. The Bardesanes of Edessa, mentioned above, who wrote in the time of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, mentions [1] the spreading of Christianity in Parthia, Media, Persia, and Bactria. After the restoration of the independence of the old Persian empire, under the Sassanidæ, the Persian Christians are better known to us in consequence of the attempt of the Persian Mani, in the latter half of the third century, to form a sort of union between the religion of Zoroaster and that of Christ.

In Arabia, the Jews, who were in great numbers, would serve as a starting-point for the preaching of the Gospel. We have no farther account of the activity of the Apostle St. Paul in this country, immediately after his conversion, than what we gather from his own expression, in his Epistle to the Galatians. If Indian and Arabian are used as synonymous terms in an old tradition, we may conclude that St. Bartholomew preached the Gospel in Arabia, for which purpose he took with him a Gospel written in the Hebrew (Aramaic) language. If this supposition is correct, Pantænus, the learned catechist of Alexandria, was the pastor of a part of this nation, in the latter half of the second century. In the early part of the third, Origen, the great Alexandrian pastor, was exerting himself in some

[8] Bayer, Historia Edessena e numis illustrata, l. iii. p. 173. Bayer is, however, wrong in placing him in the year 200. [The name is invariably Abgarus on coins. For this information I am indebted to one, whose extensive and accurate knowledge of Greek coins is only equalled by his readiness to communicate to those who seek for information on Numismatical subjects, the results of his own experience. The name of Mr. Burgon is so well known to the Numismatical world, as scarcely to require mention after the above statement.—H. J. R.]

[9] And St. Thomas also, according to the tradition of Origen, preserved in Euseb. iii. 1.

[1] Euseb. Præpar. Evang. l. vi. c. 10.

portion of Arabia. Eusebius tells us (vi. 19) "A soldier came and brought to Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, and the then prefect of Egypt, letters from the governor of Arabia, (ἡγουμενος της Ἀραβιας), requesting that Origen might be sent as soon as possible to a conference with him." The language of Eusebius is not such as to lead us to imagine he is here speaking of the chief of a set of nomadic Arabians; and even were it so, it would hardly be probable that such a person should have heard of the wisdom of a Christian teacher. On the contrary, these words naturally point to a Roman governor of the part of Arabia[2] then subject to the Roman empire. He might belong to the class of inquiring heathens, and having heard of the wisdom and the knowledge of Origen, to which the heathen were not strangers, may have turned his attention to him in particular, as an enlightened teacher. It may well be imagined that Origen made use of this opportunity to obtain the governor's favour for the Gospel. We see Origen afterwards in close connection with the Christian communities in Arabia, but the further propagation of the Gospel there in later times was much impeded by the nomadic habits of the people, and the influence of the Jews, who hated Christianity.

The ancient Syro-Persian community of Christians deduces its origin, we know, from St. Thomas the Apostle, although the first definite account of its existence is to be found in Cosmus *Indicoploistes*, in the middle of the sixth century. Some traces, however, of such a report are found in Gregory Nazianzen, in the latter part of the fourth century, for he says, (Orat. 25) that St. Thomas preached the Gospel in India, but India was then a very indefinite term. Jerome (Ep. 148) understands by it Æthiopia, which was commonly included under the name India, as well as Arabia. If the tradition, which is found in Origen, that St. Thomas was the Apostle of the Parthians, be worthy of credit, the other is, perhaps, also credible, for the Parthian empire then touched the borders of India; but these are only vague reports. Eusebius (i. 10) relates, as we remarked above, that Pantænus undertook a missionary journey to the people who dwelt eastward, and proceeded in the prosecution of it as far as India. He there found the seed of Christianity already sown by St. Bartholomew, and a Hebrew Gospel which the same apostle

[2] In later times we find a "dux Arabiæ" in the Notitia Imperii.

had brought thither. The circumstance of the Hebrew Gospel is no proof that he does not mean East India properly so called; for we may suppose, that the Jews who now inhabit the coasts of Malabar had already settled there. The words of Eusebius seem to indicate that he himself thought of a more distant country than Arabia, and would well suit the notion of East India proper. In order to decide which he most probably meant, a district of Arabia or East India proper, we must here compare some accounts of a later date, namely, of the fourth century. If then the Din, from which the missionary Theophilus came, in the time of the Emperor Constantine, is the Din at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, and if in the history of Philostorgius, (cxi. 4, &c.) by India is meant East India proper, then we must conclude, that before the beginning of the fourth century the seed of the Gospel had been sown in East India, for all which is there mentioned attests the foundation of the Christian Church to have been laid there in olden times.

We proceed now to Africa. In this quarter of the globe, Egypt was the first portion which received the knowledge of Christianity. We have remarked above, that in Alexandria fewer prejudices than elsewhere opposed the introduction of Christianity; and that, in fact, in many respects the turn of their minds there was favourable to it. There appear among the earliest zealous preachers of Christianity, men of the Alexandrian school, as Apollo the Alexandrian, and, probably, also Barnabas of Cyprus. The Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle ascribed to Barnabas, and the Egyptian Gospel, (Εὐαγγελιον κατ' Αἰγυπτιους,) in which the Alexandrian theosophic taste showed itself, the Gnosticism of the first half of the second century, are proofs of the influence that Christianity exerted over the Jewish philosophy of Alexandria. According to an old tradition, the Apostle Mark was the founder of the Alexandrian Church. Cyrene was likely to receive Christianity with great ease from Alexandria, in consequence of their constant communication, and their kindred spirit. Its progress from Lower Egypt, a place filled with Jewish and Grecian colonies, to Middle, and especially to Upper Egypt, whither foreign cultivation had less penetrated, was likely to be impeded by unacquaintance with the Greek language, the prevalence of the Coptic, and the dominion of the priests and the old Egyptian superstition. A persecution, however, of the Christians in the Thebais, under the Emperor Septimus Severus,

(Euseb. vi. 1) shows, that Christianity had spread even into Upper Egypt in the latter part of the second century. In the first half of the third, this province probably possessed a translation of the New Testament in the old language of the country.

There are no distinct and authentic accounts of the progress of Christianity in Æthiopia (Abyssinia), during these centuries. History gives us no information as to the consequences of the conversion of the courtier of Candace, queen of Meröe, which is mentioned in the Acts, ch. viii.

The Gospel soon reached Carthage, and the whole of Proconsular Africa, from their intercourse with Rome. This Church of Carthage is first known to us from the Presbyter Tertullian, in the latter half of the second century, but it was then evidently in a flourishing condition. The Christians were already there in great numbers, and complaints were made "that Christianity was spreading both in town and country among all ranks, and even among the highest[8]." Not to cite passages, where Tertullian speaks rhetorically, he mentions in his address to the governor, Scapula, (chap. iv.) a persecution of the Christians as having already taken place in Mauretania. Christianity, after the middle of the third century, had made such progress in Mauretania and Numidia, that under Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, a synod of eighty-seven bishops was held.

If we pass now to the consideration of Europe, we find in Rome the chief, but not the only station for the propagation of the Gospel. Flourishing churches at Lugdunum (Lyons), and Vienne, become known to us during a bloody persecution in the year 177. The multitude of Christians of Asia Minor, as well as the peculiar connection of these communities with that country, lead to the supposition, that the commerce between the trading town of Lyons and Asia Minor gave occasion to the introduction of Christianity from Asia Minor, where it was spread so widely from the first, into Gaul. The heathenism of Gaul withstood a long time the extension of Christianity. Even towards the middle of the third century there were but few Christian communities in Gaul. According to Gregory of Tours, a French historian, seven missionaries had then come from Rome into Gaul, and founded communities in seven towns; of which

[8] Tertullian, Apologet. i. Obsessam vociferantur civitatem, in agris, in castellis, in insulis Christianos, omnem sexum, ætatem, conditionem et *jam dignitatem* ad hoc nomen transgredi.

they became the bishops. One of these was Dionysius, the first bishop of Paris, whom later legends have confused with Dionysius the Areopagite, who was converted at Athens by St. Paul. Gregory of Tours, who wrote towards the end of the sixth century, when so many fables as to the origin of various churches were in circulation, is, we acknowledge, no very trustworthy witness; but still this account may have some truth for its foundation. One of the seven, Saturninus, the founder of the Church of Toulouse, is known to us by a far older document, the narration of his martyrdom.

Irenæus, who became bishop of Lyons, after the above-mentioned persecution in 177, states the extension of the Gospel into Germany (adv. Hæres. lib. i. c. 10). It might easily reach that part of Germany subject to the Romans, the Germania Cisrhenana, from its connection with the province of Gaul, but would experience more difficulty in penetrating among the independent neighbouring tribes of Germania Transrhenana. But the same Irenæus says, in another passage, (iii. ch. 4) "Many nations of barbarians, without paper and ink, have, through the Holy Spirit, the words of salvation written in their hearts[4]."—Irenæus here justly recognises in the activity of Christianity that peculiar and essential character, in virtue of which it can reach people in every stage of civilization, and through its living power impress its precepts on their hearts. But it is also certain that Christianity can never long maintain its own peculiar character, where it does not lay deep hold of the intellectual and moral habits of a people, and where it does not, while it brings its own peculiar character with it, raise up also and foster the seeds of all human civilization.

Irenæus is also the first to speak of the propagation of Christianity in Spain (ἐν ταις Ἰβηριαις). The tradition in Eusebius, in the fourth century, that the Apostle St. Paul preached the Gospel in Spain, is not sufficient evidence, because it was then too much the fashion to establish facts from incompetent presumptions, conclusions, and suppositions; and so, perhaps, Rom. xv. 24. may have given rise to this report. But since the Roman Bishop Clemens (Ep. i. v. 5) says that St. Paul went to the very boundaries of the West, (τερμα της δυσεως,) we cannot imagine this expression to allude to Rome, and our thoughts

[4] Sine charta et atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem.

naturally turn to Spain. Clement was probably himself the disciple of St. Paul, and this is a matter on which we can hardly suppose him to have been deceived. Most certainly, however, we find no place for any journey of St. Paul's into Spain, unless we suppose that he was freed from the imprisonment related in the Acts, and after his deliverance fulfilled the intention which he announces in the above passage. Now the Second Epistle of St. Paul to Timothy would actually compel us to suppose such a deliverance, and a second imprisonment, unless we take refuge in some very forced interpretation.

Tertullian (adv. Jud. c. 7.) speaks of the spreading of Christianity into Britain, but the passage is entirely rhetorical in its whole cast; and the statement that it had penetrated parts of Britain not subjected to the Roman dominion, may perhaps be exaggerated. Bede, in the eighth century, informs us, that Lucius, a British king, had requested Eleutheros, the bishop of Rome, in the latter part of the second century, to send missionaries to him. But the peculiarities of the later Church in Britain are an argument against its deriving its origin from Rome; for that Church departed from the Romish in many ritual points; it agreed far more with the Churches of Asia Minor; and it withstood for a long time the authority of the Romish Church. This appears to prove that the British received, either immediately or by means of Gaul, their Christianity from Asia Minor, which may have easily taken place through their commercial intercourse [5]. The later Anglo-Saxons, who opposed the spirit of Church independence, and wished to establish the supremacy of Rome, were inclined generally to trace back their Church establishments to a Roman origin, and from this attempt the above story, as well as many other false reports, may have arisen.

We proceed now to the persecutions of the Christian Church in the Roman empire.

II. *Opposition to Christianity.*

Introduction:—its first causes.

In order justly to appreciate the nature of these persecutions, it is of great importance to weigh accurately their causes. It has often been remarked as singular, that while the Romans were usually tolerant in matters of religion, they should have shown

[5] [See, however, Bishop Lloyd on Church Government, p. 48.—H. J. R.]

such impatience, and such a love of persecution towards the Christians; but every statement of Roman tolerance requires much limitation. The ideas of general rights of man, of a general freedom in matters of religion and conscience, were altogether foreign to the notions of antiquity; they were first brought to light by the Gospel, when it set forth not a national God, but a God of all human nature, when it taught us to recognise man as man, to look on all men as the image of God, with the same destination, the same duties, and the same rights; when it considered man, not as the member of *one* narrow political circle, but as called to citizenship in God's boundless kingdom; and when, freeing religion from all essential dependence on external and earthly things, it placed its whole essence in the worship of God in spirit and in truth. The men of antiquity were unable to distinguish the man from the citizen, so as to attain to a recognition of general rights of man and rights of conscience. Religion was a state matter; there were only national and state religions, and the laws which related to religion being a part of the general civil code, any violation of them was considered as a violation of the latter[7]. This was a view which especially suited the Romans, whose ruling passions and feelings were political. Cicero, de Leg. ii. 8, lays it down as a principle of legislation entirely conformable to the rights of the Roman state, that "no man shall have separate gods for himself, and no man shall worship by himself new or foreign gods, unless they have been publicly acknowledged by the laws of the state:" (nisi publice adscitos.) Now although under the emperors the old laws became less strictly observed, and foreign customs every day gained more admission into Rome, there yet arose many new causes for anxiety with regard to the introduction of new religions. In those times there was the greatest dread of every thing to which a political end might be attached, and the jealous character of despotism *was apt to fear political aims*, even where

[7] As Varro had already classed theology under three divisions—"theologia philosophica et vera," "theologia poetica et mythica," and "theologia civilis;" so Dio Chrysostom, in the first half of the second century, Orat. 12, distinguishes three sources of religion; the general religious sense in all mankind, the ἐμφυτος ἁπασιν ἀνθρωποις ἐπινοια, 21; poetry and customs, which easily extend themselves, 31; and laws which constrain, threaten, and punish, το νομοθετικον, το ἀναγκαιον, το μετα ζημιας και προσταξεων, although he justly establishes only the first as the general and original source from which all the rest proceed. Christianity can allow none of these, but the first, to be of avail.

there was nothing of the kind. Religion, and religious societies, it seemed, might easily become the pretence for political societies and conspiracies. From this feeling arose the well-known speech of Mæcenas to Augustus, in Dio Cassius, who has here at least, whether the speech be genuine or not, expressed the prevailing sentiment of those times. "Honour the gods," says Mæcenas, "by all means, according to the customs of your country, and *force* others so to honour them. But those who are for ever introducing something foreign in these matters, hate and punish, not only for the sake of the gods, because they who despise them will hardly reverence any thing besides, but also because they who introduce new divinities, mislead many others into receiving foreign laws also. Thence arise conspiracies and secret meetings, which are of infinite disservice to the monarchy. Suffer no man, either[8] to deny the gods, or to practise sorcery." The Roman jurist, Julius Paulus, states the following as one of the leading principles of Roman law. (B. v. tit. 21.) "Those who introduced new religions, or such as were unknown in their tendency and nature, by which the minds of men might be agitated[9], were degraded, if they belonged to the higher ranks, and if they were in a lower state, were punished with death." We see easily how Christianity, which produced so great, and to a Roman statesman, so incomprehensible an agitation in the consciences of men, would fall among the class of "Religiones novæ." Here also appear the two points of view in which Christianity might interfere with the laws of the state.

1. *It seduced many Roman citizens from the religion of the state, to the observance of which they were bound by the laws, and also from the observance of the "Cærimoniæ Romanæ."* Many governors, therefore, not *personally* prejudiced against Christianity, proposed a sort of compromise to the Christians who were brought before them. "They need only outwardly do what the law required, and observe the religious ceremonies prescribed by the state; the law was only concerned with outward conduct; and they were welcome to believe and to honour what they pleased in their hearts." Or else thus: "they were free constantly to honour their own God, provided they joined with his worship that of the Roman gods."

2. *It introduced a new religion, which was not recognised by*

[8] Ἄθεῳ εἶναι, the common term for a Christian.

[9] De quibus animi hominum moverentur.

the laws of the state among the "*Religiones licitæ.*" Thence came, according to Tertullian, the usual reproach of the heathens against Christianity—"Non licet esse vos;" and Celsus accuses the Christians of secret meetings, by which they contravened the prevailing laws with regard to religion (συνθηκαι παρα τα νενομισμενα). The Romans had, no doubt, a certain kind of religious toleration; but it was one which, being closely connected with the polytheistic system of philosophy and religion, was not likely to be exercised towards Christianity. When they secured to a conquered people the free observance of their old religion, they expected by that means to win the people to their interests, and also to make friends of their gods. The Romans, who were religiously disposed, attributed their universal sovereignty to this system of making friends of the gods of all nations, as we may learn from the language of the heathen in Minucius Felix, and from Aristides (Encom. Romæ). Even beyond the limits of their own kingdom, the free exercise of their religion was permitted to all nations; and therefore Rome, to which men flocked from all quarters of the globe, became the seat of religions of every sort. See Aristid. loc. cit. and Dionysius Halicarn. (Archæolog. ii. 19); the latter of whom says, "Men of a thousand nations come to our city, and there they must worship the gods of their country according to their own customs." It even happened that much from these foreign systems of worship was incorporated, with some modification, into the state-religion of Rome: but then a distinct senatus-consultum was requisite, before the Roman citizen could be permitted to join in the celebration of this foreign worship. At this time, when the authority of the old national religion, from the longing after something new, was fast dying away, and strangers came constantly to Rome from all quarters, it was often the case, that even Romans themselves would make use of the ceremonies of foreign religions, which were not yet among the "Religiones publice adscitæ;" but then this was an irregularity which old-fashioned Romans attributed to the corruptions of the times, and to the neglect of old customs. Mueh, which was reckoned among those corruptions, was passed over, as well as this, without animadversion. The change was also the less remarkable, because those who had adopted the foreign customs, observed at the same time the "Cærimoniæ Romanæ." And yet certainly at times, when matters ran too high, or when some extraordinary zeal for old

habits and the old civil virtues was awakened, laws were enacted "ad coërcendos profanos ritus."

The free and undisturbed exercise of their religion was secured also to the Jews, by senatus-consulta and imperial edicts; and the Romans could recognise, in the God of the Jews, a national God, deserving of veneration—although, at the same time, they complained of the narrow-mindedness and intolerance of the Jews, who would honour no God but their own, and forbade, with bitter enmity, the worship of any other. Judaism was a "religio licita;" and it was, therefore, made a matter of reproach to the Christians, that they had endeavoured at first, by coming forward as a Jewish sect, to creep in under the cover of an openly-tolerated religion [1]. But it was by no means permitted to the Jews to extend their religion among the *Roman* heathens; and the latter were forbidden, under heavy penalties, to undergo circumcision. But even then it happened, that from the above-mentioned causes, the number of proselytes among the heathen increased exceedingly. This the government sometimes disregarded, but at other times, on the contrary, severe laws were enacted to repress it, as those of the senate under Tiberius, (Tac. Ann. ii. 85.) those of Antoninus Pius, and Septimius Severus.

The case was wholly different with Christianity. Here was no old religion of a country and people, as in all the other cases, but Christianity appeared rather as a falling away from a "religio licita"—a revolt [2] against an ancient national religion. So Celsus, in accordance with the then prevailing sentiments, thus reproaches the Christians, B. v. 254, (p. 247, ed. Spencer,) and tells them that they are neither Heathens nor Jews: "while the Jews are, at any rate, a peculiar people, and observe a national worship, be that worship what it may: and in this they act like other men. Justly," says he, "are the old laws observed among all nations; and it is a crime to desert them." Hence arose the common reproach against Christians, and their usual appellation, "the new race," which is neither one thing nor the other, "genus tertium." The notion of a religion which should unite all men with one another, appeared to the ancients an impossibility. "A man must be very weak," says Celsus, "to imagine that Greeks and Barbarians, in Asia, Europe, and Libya, can ever unite under the

[1] Sub umbraculo religionis licitæ.

[2] It proceeded from a wish of στασιαζειν προς το κοινον των Ιουδαιων. Celsus. iii. 117.

same system of religion." B. viii. p. 438. (p. 425, ed. Spencer.) They now saw how Christianity was extending itself irresistibly among all ranks, and threatened to overturn the state religion, and with it the frame of civil society, which seemed bound up in that religion. They, therefore, thought it requisite to oppose inward power by outward violence. It was still further an excitement to jealousy, that the Christians had none of those things, which men are accustomed to look for in religion; nothing that was calculated to strike the eye, as there was in Judaism, the temple and the sacrifices of which were revered even by the heathen. Celsus says against the Christians, B. viii. p. 400, (p. 389, ed. Spencer,) that "their having neither altars, images, nor temple, was the token of an invisible, secret order." And again, the internal feelings of brotherly union, by which every Christian in every city alike found friends, who were more to him than all the pleasures of the world, were beyond the comprehension of the heathen. "What is this?" they would say; "how can the Christians, recognising one another by some secret token, love each other even before they can be mutually known?" (See the heathen in Minucius Felix.) The Roman politicians were unable to understand the bond of feeling which united Christians so strongly, and they looked for political aims, for which, in those days, the jealousy of despotism was for ever on the watch. It must, in those days of slavery, have given a bad impression of Christianity, that it gave to men something which elevated them above all fear of man, and enabled them to despise all human power, when that power required any thing from them which was contrary to their conscience and faith. Roman statesmen had no respect for the rights of conscience.—When the Christian could not be induced, by any persuasion, any fear, or any violence, to participate in the "Cærimoniæ Romanæ" enjoined by law, they laid it all to a blind obstinacy which required punishment (inflexibilis obstinatio). The refusal, however, to sacrifice to the gods, was with many a less crime than their declining, while they showed most conscientious obedience to the government in every thing which was not against the law of God, to pay any of those species of veneration to the emperors, which heathen adulation had invented in building temples to them, offering incense to their busts, and numbering them among the gods. The Christian was sure to give the highest offence, when he explained that he had one Lord in heaven that he could not recognise the emperor as his Lord in

the same sense as he did God Almighty; and when he would neither offer idolatrous worship of any kind to the busts of the emperors, nor swear by their genius. What a contrast is there between the free and lofty spirit of the Christian, whose conversation was in heaven, and the slavish feelings of the boastful, would-be philosopher, Celsus! when he says to the Christians[3]: "When they ask you to swear by the Ruler of Men, this is no severe demand, for to him is the earth given, and whatever you receive in this life, you receive from him!" On the anniversary of the emperor's accession, or on some rejoicing for a victory, when every place wore a festal appearance, the Christians shrunk back into their deep seriousness, which appeared to the heathen, compared with their own habits of carelessness and sensual enjoyment of the moment, a misanthropic hatred of the world (odium generis humani); they would take no part in wild and unreasonable pleasures, or at least pleasures which suited not serious habits of thought. Many a Christian, from his own feelings, would have abhorred giving such signs of participation as they might and ought to have done according to the principles of their religion; but the zeal for God's law was always entitled to respect, which induced men to do too much, rather than too little, and which tempted them to draw down upon their heads persecution at the hands of man, rather than to hazard for an instant doing any thing against the law of God. Many were too scrupulous to deck their houses with laurel, or illuminate them, from imagining in their mistaken notions that there would be something heathenish in these compliances. The error of *some* was easily charged as a crime on all. Hence in those times came the dangerous "crimen majestatis" (accusation of high treason) against the Christians. They were called "irreligiosi in Cæsares, hostes Cæsarum, hostes populi Romani." Many Christians, who thought themselves bound to military duties (for all did not consider a soldier's life incompatible with Christianity), yet refused to take the military oath. The fault of individuals was again laid to the charge of the whole body. "Does not the emperor justly punish you?" says Celsus; "for if all did as you do, the emperor would be left to himself, no one would defend him, the wildest barbarians would obtain the power over all the world, and there would not remain a single trace of true wisdom, nor even of your religion, among mankind; for fancy not that your

[3] Lib. viii. p. 435. (p. 422, ed. Spencer.)

Almighty God would come down from heaven to fight for us[4]." It was the fashion to attack the Christians by accusations that contradicted one another. While, on the one hand, the intimate connexion between the Christians gave rise to a charge of political conspiracies; on the other, they are accused of not paying sufficient attention to civil matters, and the affairs of the state: they are represented as men who are dead to the world, and useless in business (homines infructuosi in negotio). It used then to be said of the Christians, that they were dumb in public, and praters in private (in publico muti, in angulis garruli), and "what would become of the business of the world if all men were like them?"

Such were the causes which impelled the Roman governors to persecute Christianity, but all the persecutions did not proceed from the government. *The Christians were often the victims of popular fury.* The common people looked upon them as enemies of their gods, and that was equivalent to Atheism. "The Atheists," was the appellation of the Christians in every body's mouth, and of Atheists the vilest and most incredible things would be believed. The same reports, which at different times have been spread about those sects of Christians, which were an object of hatred and horror to the fanaticism of the multitude, were also prevalent among the heathen about the Christians generally, "that they committed unnatural crimes in their assemblies, and were in the habit of slaughtering and eating children." The evidence of abject slaves, or of persons from whom they elicited by torment whatever avowal they wanted, were then used to support these abominable accusations, and to justify the fury of the multitude. When a drought occurred in hot districts, from the want of rain, it was a proverb in the north of Africa, according to St. Augustin, that "if it does not rain, blame the Christians for it" (non pluit Deus, duc ad Christianos); if in Egypt the Nile did not irrigate the fields, if in Rome the Tiber overflowed, if an earthquake, a famine, or any other public calamity took place, the rage of the people was in an instant excited against the Christians. We have to ascribe all this, they would say, to the anger of the gods on account of the increase of Christianity. And can we wonder at this, when Porphyry, a man who wished to be accounted a philosopher, found a cause for the

[4] Lib. viii. p. 436. (p. 423, ed. Spencer.)

inveteracy of an infectious and desolating sickness in this, that Esculapius could no longer exert any effectual influence on the earth in consequence of the prevalence of Christianity?

There were also individual interests at work, which were anxious to excite the rage of the populace against Christianity; priests, artificers, and others, who derived profit from the service of idolatry, like Demetrius in the Acts; magicians, who saw their trickery laid open by Christians, and sanctified cynics, whose hypocrisy the Christians exposed. When the magician, Alexander of Abonoteichos, in Pontus, whose life Lucian wrote, observed that his arts of deception no longer obtained any credit in the cities, he exclaimed that Pontus was full of Atheists and Christians, and urged the people to stone them, unless they wished to bring upon themselves the anger of the gods. He never began his enchantments before the people, without previously crying out, "If any Atheist, Christian, or Epicurean, has sneaked in here as a spy, let him depart!" To appeal to the might of the multitude appears not to have been unusual with the defenders of heathenism, when they were hard pushed. See Timocles, in Lucian's Jupiter Tragœd. Justin Martyr knew that Crescens, one of the common pseudo-cynics of those days, who were demagogues under the veil of sanctity, had excited the people's fury against the Christians, and threatened death to himself, simply because he had exposed the hypocrisy of Crescens.

From these observations on the causes of the persecutions, it follows as a matter of course, that *till Christianity was received into the class of "religiones licitæ," by definite enactments, the Christians could enjoy no general and secure tranquillity in the exercise of their religion in the Roman empire, and they were continually the victims of popular fury and individual malice.*

We proceed now to detail the varying circumstances of the Christian Church, under the various governments of emperors, who were so differently disposed towards it.

[A.] *Persecution of Christianity by the hand of power—Condition of the Christian Church under the various emperors.*

Tertullian (Apol. ch. v. and xxi.) relates of Tiberius, that having heard of the miracles and resurrection of Christ from the report of Pilate, he proposed a bill to the senate, "that Christ

should be received among the Roman gods;" but the senate rejected this bill, that they might not renounce their old right of determining about "religiones novæ" only of their own accord (e motu proprio). The emperor did not, however, wholly renounce his undertaking, and at last threatened severe punishment against any who should accuse Christians merely as Christians. A man of so uncritical a judgment as Tertullian cannot be valid evidence for a tale, which bears every mark of falsehood about it. If we conceive that this is some real fact, which has been exaggerated, and believe a part of it, yet the little we can give credit to, even allowing that the emperor did propose some such bill, cannot prove that toleration was granted to Christianity. If we could believe that Pilate, on whom, from the frivolity of his sentiments, the miraculous events he had beheld can hardly have made more than a transient impression, did actually send a report of this nature, yet we are even then far from having any reason to conclude that a similiar impression could have been made on the heart of a Tiberius. At all events, it suits ill with the slavish character of the senate under Tiberius, to imagine that it ventured to act in this way; and this could hardly have given rise *to such a law* against the accusers of Christians, because at that time the Christian sect had scarcely obtained any name or respect. The sequel of the history is a clear proof that no such law was enacted in the time of Tiberius. The fact seems to be, that Tertullian has been imposed on by a spurious document, fabricated perhaps in very early times by some of those Christians who hold a "fraus pia" to be no sin[5].

At first, Christians were confounded with Jews, and, therefore, the edict for the banishment of the restless Jews from Rome, in the time of Claudius, A.D. 53, was executed on the Christians also, if there were any there, which may be justly supposed. Suetonius[6] says the Emperor Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, who were constantly raising disturbances, at the instigation of Chrestus. It might, indeed, be supposed, that some turbulent person of this name then living is here intended. But as none so generally known, as the expression of Suetonius would import, is to be found, and the name Χριστος was often

[5] [Lardner (Heathen Testimonies, ch. ii.) thinks that the story is in part founded on fact. His elaborate discussion of the subject is well worth reading. It is treated in a very different spirit by Gibbon, ch. xvi. p. 666.—H. J. R.]

[6] Impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.

pronounced Χρηστος by the heathen, it is highly probable that Suetonius, putting together what he had heard of the Jewish expectation of a Messiah, and the mere dark and confused accounts which may have reached him of Christ's works, has expressed himself in this indefinite manner.

The first persecution took place under Nero, A.D. 64. Nero wished to remove from himself the suspicion that he was the author of the well-known fire at Rome, and by casting this imputation on the Christians, to give a satisfaction to the fanatical and blood-thirsty populace, while at the same time he gratified his own diabolical cruelty. That Nero ever thought of laying the guilt on Christians, is a proof that they were even then an object of especial hatred to the people, and that such an accusation would then meet with a ready belief, in consequence of the common reports about the assemblies of the Christians. Tacitus was probably induced by *these same* reports to say of the Christians, "quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat." He condemns also the new sect, which was spreading abroad an un-Roman religion (superstitio), and probably without any examination, just as in later times many Romans of otherwise good understanding did, when they followed vague reports in their judgment on sects which differed from the prevailing religion. He could see in Christianity nothing but a detestable superstition, "exitiabilis superstitio!"

The Christians who were now arrested, were executed in the most cruel manner, by the command of the emperor; inclosed in the skins of wild animals, they were thrown to dogs, to be torn to pieces; or perhaps their clothes smeared with combustible materials (the "tunica molesta") they were set on fire, to give at night the effect of an illumination. This persecution was, however, by no means a general one; it affected only those in Rome, as the pretended cause of the great fire[7]. [[8] It is, however, quite open to inquiry, whether *all*, who were then executed as Christians, were really so. For as they were then following an ignorant cry of the people, as the name of Christian had then become an object of the people's hatred, and was used by them to denote

[7] [If the inscription published by Gruter, p. 238, 239, be genuine, this persecution was felt in Portugal. The inscription is given, and its genuineness well discussed, in Lardner, Heathen Test. ch. iii.—H. J. R.]

[8] This passage is incorporated into the work from the addenda to the third volume.

every thing they abhorred; and as the people might easily apply that name to all who, justly or unjustly, had become objects of public hatred, and as there was in this case undoubtedly no regular judicial inquiry, it is likely enough that many, "quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianos appellabat," although not Christians, were denounced as Christians. Tacitus (Ann. xv. 44.) says, "those were seized first who confessed," but we are then led to inquire, "confessed what?" was it that they had caused the fire, or that they were Christians? In the first case, we must imagine that they were persons who had actually allowed Nero to make use of them to cause the fire; but then these were no Christians, only men whom the multitude branded as objects of hatred and abomination with the name of Christians. These men had possibly, in the hope of bettering their own condition, given up many others as Christians, some of whom might, and others might not, be really so.] But that which befel the Christians in the metropolis would of course influence their condition in all the provinces. The impression which these persecutions and the truly diabolical character of Nero made upon the Christians, may be judged of from a saying which was spread abroad among the Christian people, and was long remembered, with just the Christian colouring which a heathen saying would obtain among them, namely, that Nero was not dead, but that he had retired beyond the Euphrates, and would return as Antichrist[9]. This is worthy of remark, as the same notion was very often entertained, in after times, of any princes who caused great commotions in the world. Under the despotic Domitian, who reigned from A.D. 81, as he favoured the profession of informers, and was in the habit of removing out of the way, by various pretences, those of whom he was jealous, or whose property he desired, the accusation of conversion to Christianity, already an object of bitter hatred (as we learn from Nero's government), was probably one of the very commonest counts in a charge of high treason[1] (crimen majestatis). In consequence of this accusation many were sentenced to death, or to banishment into an island, with the confiscation of their property[2].

[9] In the pseudo-Sibylline books, *εἶτ' ἀνακαμψει, ἰσσαζων Θεῳ αὐτον.*

[1] The joining together of *ἐγκλημα ἀθεοτητος* and *Ἰουδαιων ἠθη*, in Dio Cassius, l. lxvii. 14. clearly points out the Christians.

[2] Besides Dio Cassius, another historian, named Bruttius, in the chronicle of Eusebius, says that many suffered martyrdom under this emperor.

The emperor was also informed that there lived in Palestine two people from the family of David and Jesus, who were occupied in seditious undertakings. The seditious tendency of the Jewish expectations of a Messiah were well known, and what the Christians said of Christ's kingdom was often misunderstood[3]. He ordered the accused to be brought before him, and satisfied himself that they were poor, innocent countrymen, who were far from having any political designs, and he therefore allowed them to return home in safety[4]. But this experience did not impel him to relax the ordinances against Christianity in general, which had other grounds. Tertullian (Apol. c. 4.) certainly speaks too generally when he declares that Domitian had only made an attempt to persecute the Christians, which he abandoned again, and recalled the exiled.

The emperor Nerva, A.D. 96, from his justice and humanity, was an enemy to the system of informers, which had wrought such evil under his predecessors. This was of itself an advantage to the Christians, because one of the commonest accusations was that of being a Christian. He declared all free who were condemned on such charges, and recalled those who had been banished; and he ordered all the slaves who had come forward as accusers to their masters to be executed. He altogether forbade the reception of the accusations of slaves against their masters. This, again, must have been of service to the Christians, for many of the accusations against them proceeded from slaves of indifferent characters. The things which under the preceding government had formed the ground of most charges and sentences, could no longer be brought forward, and probably Christianity was included in this general understanding[5]. Under the short administration of this emperor, therefore, we see accusations against the Christians at a standstill, but no permanent tranquillity was then assured to them, nor their religion recognised by the legislature as a "religio licita." And we are inclined to think that since Christianity during these few years had been able to spread itself

[3] The words of Just. Mart. Apol. ii. 58, prove this; ἀκουσαντες βασιλειαν προσδοκωντας ἡμας, ἀκριτως ἀνθρωπινον λεγειν ἡμας ὑπειληφατε.

[4] Hegesipp. in Euseb. iii. 19, 20.

[5] As Dio Cassius mentions the accusation of ἀσεβεια, and also of Ἰουδαικος βιος, along with the "crimen majestatis;" although probably we are not to understand either ἀθεοτης, or Christianity under the word ἀσεβεια.

farther without impediment, the restrained fury of the people would break out after the death of this emperor with renewed violence. The new law of Trajan (A.D. 99), against secret associations (ἑταιρειαι), might clearly be used against the Christians. Pliny the younger came as governor during this reign (A.D. 110), to Bithynia and Pontus, into districts where the Christians were numerous. Many of them were brought to his tribunal: he found himself in no small embarrassment, in consequence of such proceedings being quite new to him, and no definite law existing on the matter, as well as from the number of the Christians; "For many," he writes, "of every age and rank, of both sexes, are implicated in the danger; for not only in the towns, but also in the villages, and in the country, has the contagion of this superstition spread." The temples were forsaken, and the usual services of idolatry could no longer be maintained, and victims for sacrifice were rarely brought. Pliny did not suffer himself, like his friend Tacitus, to be guided by the vague reports of the people, but took proper pains to inform himself about the question, and interrogated those who had renounced the Christian communion for some years. We must remember that renegades are seldom inclined to speak well of the society to which they formerly belonged. With the usual brutality of Roman justice, which never recognised a human being in a slave, he applied the torture to two female slaves, who had served the office of deaconesses in the Christian community, in order to obtain from them an avowal of the truth; and yet all that he could learn was "that the Christians were accustomed to meet on a certain day (Sunday), that they then sang a hymn together in praise of their God Christ, and that they[6] mutually pledged themselves, not[7] to the commission of any crime, but to abstain from theft and perjury; never to break their word, and never to withhold a deposit[8]; that they separated after this, and in the evening met again for a simple and innocent repast[9]. And even these latter assemblies they had discontinued in consequence of the imperial edict against the

[6] The remembrance of the baptismal vow, the "sacramentum militiæ Christianæ," which was often urged upon their minds in practical discourses.

[7] A plain contradiction to the vulgar reports about the horrible purposes of the assemblies of the Christians.

[8] One who had violated his baptismal vow by such a crime was excluded from the communion of the Church.

[9] A clear contradiction to the vulgar reports about the cannibal meals of the Christians, "epulis Thyesteis."

Hetariæ." One would have supposed that such a discovery of the effects of Christianity would have led Pliny, if not to further inquiries as to the origin and nature of a religion, which produced effects so widely differing from those of Paganism, on such a variety of characters, yet, at least, to the toleration of a religion in which nothing, either politically or morally speaking, could be found worthy of punishment. No such thing! Pliny was too completely possessed by the narrow-minded, political views of a Roman, so to judge. Unable to attain to any view but that presented by his philosophical, or his state religion, he saw in that which, differing as widely from the Roman state religion as from his philosophical one, could yet demand and obtain[1] so great a power over the consciences of men, only a perverse and[2] extravagant superstition. We may see from this the power of prevailing opinions, even on good men, when they are not counteracted by some higher principle than human systems can give. The noble, tender-hearted Pliny, as he seems to be from his letters, is here unable to distinguish the man from the citizen and subject, to recognise the rights of man as man, and to perceive the power of free and firm conviction, as well as the regard it must command in every moral feeling heart. He required only a blind obedience to the laws of the state. The Christians must deny their faith, invoke the gods! they must offer incense, and pour libations to the statues of the emperor, as well as of the gods, and curse Christ! If they refused, and after the governor had three times, under a threat of death, requested them to abjure their belief, they still avowed stedfastly, that they were and would remain Christians, Pliny condemned them to death, as obstinate confessors of a "religio illicita," which was in direct violation of the laws of the state. Those who complied with the governor's requisition, obtained pardon. It is not to be wondered at, if many who embraced Christianity during its rapid propagation in these regions in the tranquil times of Nerva, had, nevertheless, not thoroughly considered what Christianity really requires, and whether they were ready to give themselves up wholly to God, as he requires, and to sacrifice every thing to him; that is, if there were such persons as our Lord describes, Matt. xiii. 20—22. History often shows us that these sudden conversions have something unsound in them. Many, therefore, we may suppose, there

[1] Pliny might well think this rather too much of religion.

[2] Superstitio prava et immodica.

were among the multitude of the Christians, whose faith was not proof against the sight of death. Pliny might perceive, as the effect of his prosecutions, that, while many abjured Christianity from the fear of man, and the "few chosen" became separated from the "many called" by the storm of persecution, the idolatrous worship of the heathen temples revived again in public. Pliny, who judged by appearances, thought that this sect might easily be suppressed, if it were treated with a due mixture of severity and mildness; if the obstinate were punished, to frighten the rest, and yet those, who would like to retract, were not driven to despair, by closing the door of pardon against them.

In his report to Trajan (x. 97.) on this matter, he makes also the following inquiries. Whether he should make any distinction as to age, or deal with the young[3] just as with the old? Whether he should give room for repentance, or in every case punish every one who had ever been a Christian? Whether Christians should be punishable simply as Christians, or only in consequence of other crimes?—It appears from the conduct of Pliny, as governor and judge, how, according to his sentiments, most of these inquiries should be answered; and the emperor Trajan approved his conduct, and seems in his decision to coincide wholly with his views. He did not allow the Christians to be classed with common criminals, whom the governors employed their police[4] to detect. Christians were not to be sought for, but when they were brought up, they should be punished. The emperor does not say *how;* indeed he avows, that on this part of the subject he could not determine[5] any thing definite. It appears, however, that the punishment of death was generally understood; while pardon was to be extended to those who would renounce Christianity, and return to the Roman gods.

Tertullian had long ago pointed out a contradiction in this decision. If the emperor thought the Christians criminal, they ought to have been searched for and punished like any other criminals, and brought to punishment. If he thought them innocent, punishment was wrong in every case. This is certainly a just opinion in a moral point of view; but the emperor regarded

[3] It seems probable that the *number of children and young people* found among the Christians gave occasion to this inquiry.

[4] The εἰρηναρχοι, curiosi.

[5] Neque enim in universum aliquid, quod quasi certam formam habeat, constitui potest.

the matter in a *politico-juridical* light. He thought that it was impossible, in any case, to allow contempt of the "Cæremoniæ Romanæ," the open violation of the laws of the state, to go unpunished, although unaccompanied by any moral guilt[6]. So Trajan thought it necessary to act when any such illegal conduct came before the governor publicly, but he wished then to wink at it as much as possible, in order to *spare* the Christians, as far as was consistent with a due observance of the laws. He, like Pliny, believing Christianity to be a delusion, thought that if mercy and rigour were blended together, and if, without making any great stir, the open offences of this kind were punished, but they were not persecuted, the enthusiastic fancy would pass, and the thing itself would, by and by, die away. Had there been nothing higher in Christianity, the consequences would have justified the opinion of Trajan.

That which had hitherto been a matter of tacit deduction, namely, that Christianity was not legally received among the religions tolerated by the state, was now expressly declared against Christians by a distinct law, and their condition must, in consequence, very soon have changed for the worse. The only search after Christians which Trajan had in his contemplation, was of a legal kind; but it often happened that Christians, or those suspected to be so, were seized by furious mobs, and so brought to the judgment-seat. There were some governors, to whom bloodshedding was a matter of indifference, and they willingly sacrificed these persecuted creatures to the fury of the populace, in order to make themselves beloved in the province, and some who themselves partook of the violence of the people. Under his successor Hadrian, they might imagine themselves at liberty to act thus with impunity, or even with the emperor's approbation, as he was known to be a zealous supporter of the *sacra* of his country. When he visited Greece, A.D. 124, and was initiated into all the Grecian mysteries, the enemies of Christianity, feeling this a favourable moment, began immediately to persecute it. The two learned Christians, Quadratus and Aristides, were induced by this to offer to Hadrian two treatises in defence of their fellow believers. Whether these induced him to join the side of the Christians, cannot be decided with certainty; but, at any rate,

[6] As Pliny says, qualecunque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri.

the emperor's zeal for the old religion was not sufficient to extinguish his love of justice. It was impossible that an emperor and governors who loved justice should be satisfied with tumultuous conduct, through which the innocent would often be involved in the punishment of the guilty. The proconsul of Asia-Minor, Serennius Granianus, complained on the subject to Hadrian, and he was induced to send a rescript to his successor in the proconsul-ship, Minucius Fundanus[6].

The emperor declared himself strongly against a conduct, by which the innocent might be disturbed, and which might give rise to false accusations, for the sake of extorting money, by threatening to accuse people as *suspected* Christians[7]. All accusations against the Christians were to be preferred in the legal forms, and no measures taken against them on mere popular clamour. If Christians were legally charged, and proved guilty of actions[8] contrary to the laws, they were to be punished according to their guilt; but, at the same time, *false* accusers were to suffer heavy punishment. Similar rescripts were sent by the emperor to other quarters[9]. This edict may have been understood as an edict of toleration with regard to Christianity. Under the name of "false accusers," those may be understood who accused the Christians of nefarious practices from mere common report; and the emperor

[6] The genuineness of this rescript is attested, not only by the citation of it in the Apology addressed by Melito, bishop of Sardis, to the second successor of Hadrian, (see Eusеb. iv. 26.) but still more strongly by internal evidence: for it is not to be believed, that a Christian could have contented himself with saying so little in favour of the Christians. The fact of Hadrian's dealing mildly with the Christians, is also attested by the praises bestowed on him in the work of a Christian, who probably wrote not long after these times, i. e. in the fifth book of the pseudo-Sibylline Prophecies.

Ἀργυροκρανος ἀνηρ τις δ' ἐσσεται οὐνομα ποντου,
Ἐσται και παναριστος ἀνηρ και παντα νοησει.

[7] I think that Rufinus had the Latin original before him, but that Eusebius, as often happens, has not translated it accurately. Eusebius says, ἱνα μη τοις συκοφανταις χορηγια κακουργιας παρασχιθῃ: Rufinus, "Ne calumniatoribus latrocinandi tribuatur occasio." One cannot very well see how Rufinus could change the general term κακουργια into the special one, "latrocinatio," to which the context does not seem at all to point; while Eusebius, on the contrary, was likely enough inaccurately to put a general for a particular term. "Latrocinari" is here synonymous with "concutere" in other places, and the words of Tertullian to Scapula, when he began to persecute the Christians, may serve as a commentary on this passage—"Parce provinciæ, quæ visa intentione tua obnoxia facta est concussionibus et militum et inimicorum suorum cuique."

[8] Eos adversum leges quicquam agere.

[9] According to Melito of Sardis, loc. cit.

may have meant that the avowal and exercise of the Christian religion should not be considered criminal, and that only decided crimes should be punished in the Christians just as in other people. Thus the emperor would, in this case, have received Christianity into the number of the "religiones licitæ:" but if that was his intention, there needed a more explicit declaration of what he understood by the words "contrary to the laws." Some particular and express declaration was evidently needed on the subject, after the rescript of Trajan, if the very non-observance of the Roman religion, and the exercise of Christianity [1], was no longer to be held "contrary to the laws." The only thing which clearly results from this decree is, that it was in opposition to riotous attacks on persons, as being suspected of Christianity, and required legal proceedings in all accusations of them. Only in the case of governors inclined to favour them, the indefinite expressions of the edict might perhaps be turned to the advantage of the Christians [2].

Those measures were, however, due rather to his love of justice than to any regard for Christianity or Christians, for Hadrian was, as we remarked above, a zealous and precise observer of the old Roman and also of the Grecian religion, and despised foreign ones (peregrina sacra). See Ælius Spartianus, Vita Hadriani, c. xxii. This disposition is shown in the remarkable letter of this emperor to the consul Servianus, concerning the Alexan-

[1] Although Melito of Sardis says to Marcus Aurelius afterwards, that his predecessors had honoured Christianity in connexion with other religions (προς ταις ἀλλαις θρησκειαις ἐτιμησαν), we cannot conclude much from this; for it is natural enough that a person, who was claiming the protection of the emperor for Christianity, should lay as much stress as possible on any thing in the measures of his predecessors, which either really favoured, or appeared to favour, the Christians.

[2] Tertullian ad Scapulam, c. iv. brings forward instances of governors who made use of the rescript to save the Christians. One was Vespronius Candidus, who released a Christian who was brought before him, under the plea that it was against the order to obey the cry of the multitude, "quasi tumultuosum civilem* satisfacere." Another was Pudens, who, when he had ascertained from the protocol (elogium, the committal or the proces-verbal,) with which a Christian had been sent to him, that he had been seized upon with threats and in a tumultuous manner, (concussione ejus intellecta) let him go, declaring that without a certain and legal accuser, he could not try him according to law.

* I leave this quotation as I find it, although I cannot construe it. In my edition of Tertull. ad Scap. (Cambr. 1686), it stands thus: "Quasi tumultuosum *civibus suis* satisfacere," which is intelligible enough.—H. J. R.

drians [3]. Although he may perhaps in this place be speaking of the curious mixture of the various elements of different religions in Alexandria, rather than of Christianity in general, yet as a friend to Christianity his language would have been different. The relation, therefore, of Ælius Lampridius (Alexander Severus, ch. xxiv.) an historian of the early part of the fourth century, is incredible, when he asserts that the emperor, in the intention of receiving Christ among the Roman gods, had in all cities temples without statues, which were called Templa Hadriani [4]; but that he was withheld from the fulfilment of his intention by the representation of the priests. How this report arose among the Christian people, without any historical ground, admits of a ready elucidation, if we reflect that nothing was known of the destination of these temples, and that this emperor was looked upon in a very exaggerated light as the protector of the Christians, and so, by putting these two things together, they attributed to this emperor what really was the case with others, as for instance Alexander Severus.

Under this government, which in the Roman empire favoured the Christians, they suffered in another quarter a severe persecution. When Barchochab, whom the Jews believed to be the Messiah, and under whose conduct they revolted from the Romans, could not induce the Christians in Palestine to deny their faith, and take part in the revolt, he executed all who fell into his hands by cruel and painful deaths.

After the death of Hadrian, A.D. 138, the efficacy of his edict against the attacks of popular fury passed away. There arose besides, under the government of Antoninus Pius, public calamities, which excited afresh the rage of the populace, a famine, overflowings of the Tiber, earthquakes in Asia Minor and Rhodes, and desolating fires in Rome, Antioch, and Carthage [5]. The gentle and humane disposition of the emperor could not view with satisfaction these out-breakings of popular wrath, and in different rescripts addressed to the Greek states, he expressly condemned this violent conduct. But this emperor must have done even more for the Christians, if a rescript, ascribed in all probability to him, and not to his successor Marcus Aurelius, were genuine, the rescript to the council of Asia Minor (προς το κοινον της Ασιας,)

[3] Flavii Vopisci Saturninus, c. ii. [4] Ἀδριανεια, so Aristid. Orat. Sacr. I.
[5] Jul. Capitolini Vita Antonini Pii, c. ix.

for he therein expressly declares, that the Christians should be punished only in case of their being convicted of political crimes; and, on the contrary, any one who accused another simply on the ground of his being a Christian, should himself be liable to punishment. But the language of the rescript is rather that of a Christian than of a heathen emperor, especially of one whose peculiar praise was "insignis erga cærimonias publicas cura ac religio," (Fabretti Marmor.) and the history of the consecutive times does not bespeak the existence of such an edict[6].

Under the government of the next emperor, Marcus Aurelius, the philosopher, many public calamities arose which excited the rage of the populace against the Christians, especially a desolating pestilence, which, extending itself by degrees from Ethiopia to Gaul, infested the whole Roman empire. During this time the magician Alexander, in Asia Minor (see above), excited the zeal of the people for their own gods, from whom he promised miraculous assistance, and thus also he excited the wrath of the people against the Christians. But had there been nothing here but popular fury, and had this emperor been of the same sentiments as his predecessor, this ebullition would soon have been repressed. On the contrary, however, we see under his government the people and the higher officers of the state united together against the Christians. They were so severely persecuted in Asia Minor, that Bishop Melito, of Sardis, their advocate with the emperor, says, "The race of the worshippers of God in Asia Minor, are now persecuted more than ever was the case before, in consequence of *new edicts*, for shameless informers, thirsting after other men's property, now plunder the guiltless by day and night, whenever they can find any grounds for it in the edicts. And we object not to this, if it proceeds from your command, for a just emperor would never decide unjustly, and we willingly bear the happy lot of such a death; and we only make *this* petition to you, that you would acquaint yourself with those who are thus persecuted, and judge fairly whether they deserve punishment and death, or safety and tranquillity. If, how-

[6] Eusebius, however, says, that Melito of Sardis, in his Apology, addressed to the successor of Antoninus Pius, appeals to this rescript; but it strikes one immediately, that Melito, in the fragment quoted by Eusebius (loc. laud.), just exactly does *not* quote the rescript, for that would have been far more favourable for the Christians than the edict quoted by Melito. [See Moyle's works, ii. 236; and Chevallier's Apostolical Epistles, p. 278.—H. J. R.]

ever, this new decree and this decision comes *not* from you yourself, a decree such as would be unbecoming even against barbarian enemies, we pray you the more earnestly, not to suffer us to be a prey to such rapacity[7]." These words of Melito, where Christian dignity is mingled with Christian prudence, lead us to many observations. Immediately after the publication of Trajan's edict, a *Christian once accused might be punished with death*; and this edict was never officially revoked, although the mildness of the last emperor in this respect may have prevented its severe and literal execution. But Melito informs us that a new and terrible edict had been put forth by the proconsul, *inviting informations against the Christians.* This is the more striking under the government of this emperor, who was by no means inclined to approve of the infamous trade of informers[8], and whose principle seemed rather to be to lighten those punishments which the laws denounced against crime[9]. We can hardly imagine that the proconsul would have ventured to publish a new edict on his own authority, and Melito appears to be quite persuaded that it came from the emperor himself; while at the same time he expresses himself doubtfully on the point, in order that he might ask its repeal with a better grace.

Let us now consider generally the sentiments of this emperor towards the Christians, in connection with his philosophical and religious systems, and see what results from it in relation to his actual conduct towards the Christians. His cold, contemplative stoicism, could never make him their friend; the objects of his highest admiration were a calmness that proceeded from philosophical speculation, and a resignation which could coolly contemplate even the annihilation of our personality, as we have above remarked; but he had no sympathy with calmness and resignation, that arose from a living faith, and a hope founded on that faith, and animated by it. The spirit with which the Christian martyrs met death, nay, even in many instances sought it (although the Church in general condemned this latter custom), appeared to him a mere delusion of enthusiasm; for the faith from which this spirit proceeded, no man could communicate to another by philosophical demonstration. The principle which the Christians acted on, rather to die than to do what was required of them, Marcus

[7] [Dr. Neander is either misprinted, or he has mistranslated Eusebius here; he leaves out the negative in this sentence, and thus makes it nonsense. In my edition the negative stands.—H. J. R. The passage is in Euseb. iv. 26.]

[8] Julii Capitolini Vita, c. xi. [9] L. c. c. xxiv.

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Aurelius was as little able to appreciate as Pliny had been. He also could only see in this a blind opposition to the laws of the state, and his philosophical bigotry would assist in inflaming his political zeal. We shall transcribe here the very words of this emperor in regard to the Christians; they are taken from his Meditations (xi. 3). "The soul must be prepared when it must leave the body, either to be extinguished, or to be dissolved, or to remain a little longer with the body. This readiness must proceed from free choice, and not from mere obstinacy[1], as in the Christians; and it must also be the result of contemplation, and a lofty spirit, without any theatrical effect, so that a man should also be able to persuade another to the same course." In this point of view, therefore, although he might find the Christians guilty of no moral offence, and probably disbelieve the often refuted tales about them, yet he might consider them as enthusiasts, dangerous to the well-being of civil society, and as he remarked that Christianity, under the mild government of the last emperor, was constantly taking deeper root, he might think it necessary to oppose its increase by severe measures. There may be in philosophy, just as well as in any thing else, a bigoted attachment to certain notions and ideas, which renders men intolerant and fond of persecution. It is well, indeed, that Plato's wish of seeing philosophy united with sovereign power, can rarely be realized. Plato would be right, if by his philosophy true wisdom is understood, which never can be learned in a school; but the philosophy of a school, united with sovereign power, would assuredly be a most fruitful source of oppression.

We should, nevertheless, be judging most unjustly, if we represented this emperor to ourselves as a philosopher, whom certain general notions had taught proudly to despise the religious faith of other men. We find in him a certain child-like piety, which he owed, not to his stoicism, but, after his own confession, to the influence[2] of a pious mother on his education. And though his

[1] Μη κατα ψιλην παραταξιν; pervicacia, obstinatio.

[2] παρα της μητρος το Θεοσεβες. [In the Soirées de S. Petersbourg there is an eloquent passage on this subject, of which it will not be out of place to quote the beginning here:—"It belongs to our sex, no doubt, to form mathematicians, tacticians, chemists, &c. but that which one calls Man, that is to say, the moral Man, is formed perhaps at ten years of age, and if a man has not thus *been formed upon his mother's knees*, he will feel it a heavy misfortune throughout his life. Nothing can stand in the place of such an education. If the mother has made it a duty to grave deeply the Divine character on the forehead of her son, we may be

child-like piety sometimes attaches itself to the superstition of the popular religion, yet even this child-like piety gives a far more honourable testimony to the disposition of the emperor, than the proud feelings of a haughty deism ever could have done. The following are a few traits of his religious creed. To the same inquiry which was proposed to the Christians, "Where hast thou seen the gods, or where hast thou learnt *their existence*, so that thou shouldest honour them thus?" he answers, "First[3], they are visible even to our eyes; besides, I have never seen my soul, and yet I treat it with reverence: so also, when I constantly experience the power of the gods, I learn to recognise their existence, and I honour them[4]." This experience of the power of God was certainly no delusion. It was the living God, to him an unknown God, whom he might have learned to know from the Gospel, but whom he worshipped under the name of those creatures of his imagination. When he looked back upon the Divine guidance, which had accompanied him from childhood, he said, "As far as depends on the gods, and the influence which descends from them on me, their guidance and their inspiration, I might already have attained to a life conformable to the rules of nature; but that I have fallen short of this aim, is my own fault, and I owe it to my neglect of the warnings, nay, of the express instructions, of the gods[5]." The distinction which he saw between an outward abstinence from evil and a true inward holiness, and the recognition of the sinfulness of all mankind, must, one would have thought, have led him to the notion of a Redeemer from sin; but he explained these truths to himself by means of his stoic doctrine of fatalism—and in regard to this also he learned to practise a stoic resignation; for he says, "When thou seest another sin, think that thou thyself sinnest oftentimes, and art just such an one thyself. And even though thou abstainest from many sins, yet thou hast within thee the inclination to such practices, though from fear, from vanity, or some similar disposition, thou avoidest them[6]." He was honestly devoted to the religion of the state and of the people, although he endeavoured to avoid the abject and extravagant superstition which was in

almost sure that the hand of vice will never be able to efface it." Vol. i. p. 215. H. J. R.]

[3] It is uncertain whether the emperor here alludes to the stars, as visible divinities, or to the appearances of the gods in visions and dreams. The latter seems the most probable supposition.

[4] L. xiii. c. 28. [5] I. 17. [6] Lib. xi. 18.

vogue among the heathen of his time[7]. He believed, for instance, as well as his contemporaries, that the gods proclaim by dreams the means of recovery from diseases, and he thought that he had often experienced their assistance[8]. When the pestilence we mentioned above was raging in Italy, he saw in it a warning to revive the old worship in all its power. He invited priests from all quarters to Rome[9], and delayed his departure to the war against the Marcomanni, during the religious solemnities, by which he had hopes of driving away the pestilence. Many even of the heathens vented their sarcastic humour on the number of victims he offered up during his preparation for this war[1].

We can, from these circumstances, explain the fact how Marcus Aurelius, distinguished as he was for a love of justice, and for the mildness which shines forth, as well in his conduct as in his writings, might nevertheless, while he sought to maintain the old state religion, become, from political and religious motives, a persecutor of Christianity, which was then extending itself every where. A law of his is extant, in which he condemns to banishment on an island, all those "who do any thing with the intention of terrifying the light dispositions of men by the fear of the Deity[2]." It is not immediately to be concluded that this law was made against the Christians, because in those days there were many goetæ and impostors, against whom it may justly have been directed. But the emperor, M. Aurelius, may very readily have classed these people and Christians together, as Celsus has done, who wrote against the Christians in his time. This prince was inclined to pardon those who confessed their crimes and showed repentance, even in cases where he might have punished without being considered severe. (See the example in Capitolinus, ch. xiii.) But the Christians never would acknowledge that they had done wrong, and only persisted the more in what the laws forbade them to do. On this very account the emperor may have ordered that every means should be tried to force them to recant, and that the punishment of death should be inflicted

[7] He desired a θεοσεβεια without a δεισιδαιμονια. [8] I. 17.

[9] Jul. Capitol. c. xiii. c. xxi.

[1] Hence the epigram recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus, L. xxv. c. 4. Οἱ λευκοι βοες Μαρκῳ τῳ Καισαρι: ἀν συ νικησῃς ἡμεις ἀπωλομεθα.

[2] "Relegandum ad insulam, qui aliquid fecerit, quo leves hominum animi superstitione numinis terreantur." From the Pandects.

only in extreme cases, where nothing would move them to give in. But even thus an ill-judged humanity, whose only view was to spare the effusion of blood, may have been the occasion of many cruel tortures.

If we now put together what we find peculiar in the nature of the persecutions of this time, we obtain a result combining two circumstances, *first*, that inquisition for Christians was ordered by the laws, although the fury of the populace frequently outstripped the legal proceedings of public functionaries. According to the edict of Trajan, no such inquisition was to be made, but now, on the contrary, the Christians were eagerly sought for, and were often obliged to escape by hiding themselves, as appears from the several accounts of the persecutions, and from the expressions of Celsus[3]. Up to this time then, the treatment they had experienced was *this: the Christians who were accused and would not, after repeated requests, abjure their faith, were executed without the application of tortures! Now*, it was attempted to force the Christians to recant by the use of tortures. An edict which is still extant, under the name of the [4]Emperor Aurelianus,

[3] Celsus says of the Christians, (viii. p. 418,) ἢτοι φεύγοντες κι κρυπτόμενοι, ἢ ἁλίσκομενοι και ἀπολλυμενοι: and, again, (viii. p. 436,) ὑμων δε κάν \αναται τις, ἐτι λανθανων, ἀλλα ζητειται προς θανατου δικην.

[4] This edict, which is preserved for us in the Acta Symphoriani, of which we shall have to speak hereafter, is thus expressed in the original:

"Aurelianus Imperator omnibus administratoribus suis atque rectoribus. Comperimus ab his, qui se temporibus nostris Christianos dicunt, legum præcepta violari. Hos comprehensos, nisi diis nostris sacrificaverint, diversis punite cruciatibus, quatenus habeat distinctio prolata justitiam et in resecandis criminibus ultio terminata jam finem."

No aim appears likely to be answered by the forgery of such an edict, its language is the official language of the day, and its whole spirit breathes the Roman statesman, so that an unprejudiced person can scarcely believe it spurious. If it belongs to the time of Aurelianus, whose name it bears, the martyr, in whose history it stands, must have died in his reign. But it is difficult to believe, that under this emperor they proceeded to shed Christian blood (see below). Also the manner in which it speaks of Christians, as not then being an old sect, appears to suit the time of Aurelius better than that of Aurelianus, in which the Christian sect had so long openly existed. Also the accusation against the Christians, that the exercise of their religion was a violation of the laws of the state, could hardly be brought forward under the Emperor Aurelian, for Christianity in that case had been recognised as a "religio licita" fifteen years, when this edict appeared. Most undoubtedly, therefore, we must read Aurelius instead of Aurelianus, two names which are constantly interchanged. Lucius Aurelius Commodus was favourable to the Christians, and therefore, he is out of the question; it suits no one but the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

(which probably, as Pagi and Ruinart justly suspect, stands for Aurelius), coincides exactly with this account, and as it bears every mark of genuineness in its language and matter, it is not improbable that it may be the very edict sent by this emperor to the governors of the provinces. It runs thus:—"We have heard that the laws are violated by those who in our times call themselves Christians. Seize these people, and if they refuse to sacrifice to our gods, punish them with various kinds of torments, in such a manner, however, that justice be mingled with your severity, and that the punishment cease, when the object is attained of extirpating the crime!" This last addition suits exactly the character of Aurelius; the governors were to look stedfastly at *the object* he had in view, namely, to abolish Christianity, which was at variance with the state religion, and to lead back the people to the worship of the Roman gods; but they were not to give themselves up to the dictates of blind passion. The caution might be humane enough, but it was totally insufficient to restrain men from cruel and arbitrary measures.

We shall now proceed to a more detailed consideration of the progress of these persecutions in the provinces, and the conduct of the Christians under them, after the narration of credible authorities. We have, in the first place, a circumstantial account of the persecution in the year 167, in which the Church of Smyrna lost their old and venerable bishop, Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, and of which this Church has given a detailed narrative in a circular, addressed to other Christian Churches[5]. The then proconsul of Asia Minor does not appear to have been personally hostile to the Christians; but the heathen people, with whom the Jewish rabble joined themselves, were enraged against them, and the proconsul yielded compliance to the fury of the people, and the demands of the law. He endeavoured to move the Christians to recantation by threats, by the sight of the torture, and of wild beasts, to whom they were to be thrown; and if they remained stedfast in their faith, he condemned them to death. In one respect he certainly yielded too far to the savage cruelty of the people, and that was in choosing painful and ignominious kinds of death, such as throwing them to wild beasts, or making them perish on the funeral pile, for the law did not require this from him. But, on the other hand, as the law

[5] Partly quoted in Eusebius, (iv. 15.) but more at large in the collection of the Patres Apostolici.

denounced in general terms sentence of death against obstinate adherence to Christianity, people chose to suppose that persons who were no Roman citizens, must die an ignominious death[6]. Under the severest tortures, even such as raised the pity of the heathen themselves, the Christians showed great tranquillity and calmness. "They showed us all," says the Church, "that they were absent from their bodies during these torments, or rather that the Lord stood by them, and conversed with them; and, relying on the grace of Christ, they despised the torments of the world." But the difference was here exhibited between the passing intoxication of enthusiasm, which though it seeks danger with rash self-confidence, turns to cowardice at the presence of death; and that resolute devotedness to God, which waits for the call of God, and then seeks strength from him. A certain Quintus, of Phrygia, a nation peculiarly liable to fantastic and exaggerated feelings, with many others who had been seized with this enthusiastic fire from his persuasion, appeared before the tribunal of the proconsul of his own accord, and declared himself a Christian; a conduct which, although always blamed by the Christian Church, gave an opportunity to the heathen to represent Christians as a set of restless enthusiasts, who ran into danger and death, in the blindness of a deluded imagination. Now when the proconsul pressed this Phrygian hard, and had affrighted him by the sight of the wild beasts, to which he was to be thrown, he gave in, swore by the genius of the emperor, and offered sacrifices. The Church, after the narration of these circumstances, add this remark: "Therefore we do not approve of those who give themselves up, for the Gospel does not instruct us to do this." How different was the conduct of the aged Polycarp! when he heard the cry of the people who were eager for his blood, his first impression was to remain in the town, and to await God's pleasure in the event; but the prayers of the Church prevailed on him to take refuge in a neighbouring country seat. Here he remained in company with

[6] Such punishments were assigned by law to many of the crimes of which the People's blind fanaticism accused the Christians. "Qui sacra impia nocturnave, ut quem obcantarent, fecerint faciendave curaverint, aut cruci suffiguntur, aut bestiis objiciuntur. Qui hominem immolaverint, sive ejus sanguine litaverint, fanum templumve polluerint, bestiis objiciuntur, vel si honestiores sint, capite puniuntur. Magicæ artis conscios summo supplicio affici placuit, id est bestiis objici aut cruci suffigi, ipsi autem magi vivi exuruntur. Julius Paulus in sententiis receptis."

some friends, busied day and night, as he was accustomed, in offering prayers for all communities in the whole world. When he was searched for, he betook himself to another country place, and he had scarcely gone before the police appeared, to whom the retreat of Polycarp had been made known by some of his confidential but unworthy friends. They found two slaves, one of whom, under the pain of torture, betrayed the place to which the bishop had fled. When they came, Polycarp, who was in the upper story, might have retreated from the flat roof to another house, a convenience which the eastern mode of building afforded, but he said, "God's will be done!" He came down to the police-officers, and ordered them as much refreshment as they might be inclined to take, begging only as a favour that they would allow him one hour's undisturbed prayer. The fulness of his heart, however, carried him on for two hours, and even the heathen were touched at the sight of his devotion.

When this interval had passed, he was conducted on an ass to the town, where the chief officer of police (εἰρηναρχος) going with his father out of the town, met him, and taking him into his carriage, spoke to him in a kind and friendly manner: "What harm," said he, "can it be for you to say, '*our lord the emperor*,' and to offer up sacrifices[7]?" Polycarp at first was silent, but when they continued to press him, he calmly said, "I will not do what you advise me." When they saw that they could not persuade him, they grew angry. With bitter and contumelious expressions they threw him out of the carriage, and so roughly as to injure one of the bones of his shin. He turned, and went on his way, as if nothing had happened. When he appeared before the proconsul, the latter said to him, "Swear, curse Christ, and I will set you free!" The old man answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and I have received only good at his hands! Can I then curse him, my King and my Saviour?" When the proconsul continued to press him,

[7] We may learn from the words of Tertullian, Apologet. c. 34, what the sentiments of the Christians about such a demand were. "The name *Lord* is also one of the names of God. I am willing to call the emperor lord, but in the common acceptation of language, and then I must not be compelled to call him lord *in the same sense* that I call God by this name. But I am free from him. I have one Lord, the almighty and eternal God, who is the Lord also of the emperor." What a contrast between the *free spirit* of this Christian and the slavish adulation of a *Roman senate* since the time of Augustus! Truly, indeed, it is the Son of God who sets us free!

Polycarp said, "Well, then, if you desire to know who I am, I tell thee freely, *I am a Christian!* If you desire to know what Christianity is, appoint an hour and hear me." The proconsul, who here showed that he did not act from any religious bigotry, and would gladly have saved the old man, if he could silence the people, said to Polycarp, "Only persuade the people." He replied, "To you I felt myself bound to render an account, for our religion teaches us to treat the powers ordained by God with becoming reverence, as far as is consistent with our salvation. But as for those without, I consider them undeserving of any defence from me." And justly too! for what would it have been but throwing pearls before swine, to attempt to speak of the Gospel to a wild, tumultuous, and fanatical mob? After the governor had in vain threatened him with wild beasts and the funeral pile, he made the herald publicly announce in the Circus, that Polycarp had confessed himself a Christian. These words contained the sentence of death against him. The people instantly cried out, "This is the teacher of atheism, the father of the Christians, the enemy of our gods, who has taught so many not to pray to the gods, and not to sacrifice!" As soon as the proconsul had complied with the demand of the populace, that Polycarp should perish on the funeral pile, Jew and Gentile hastened with the utmost eagerness to collect wood from the market-places and the baths. When they wished to fasten him with nails to the pile, the old man said, "Leave me thus, I pray, unfastened; He, who has enabled me to abide the fire, will give me strength also to remain firm on the stake." Before the fire was lighted he prayed thus: "O Lord! Almighty God! the Father of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ; through whom we have received a knowledge of Thee! God of the angels and of the whole creation, of the whole human race, and of the saints, who live before thy presence! I thank thee that thou hast thought me worthy, this day, and this hour, to share the cup of thy Christ among the number of thy witnesses!"

The Church recognised, in the example of their bishop, what the nature of a genuine evangelical martyrdom should be:— "for," they write, "he waited to be given up (he did not press forward uncalled to a martyr's death), as also did our Lord, that we might therein follow him; so that we should not look to that which concerns our own salvation alone, but also to that which is requisite for our neighbour: for this is the nature of true and

genuine charity—to seek, not only our own salvation, but that of all the brethren."

The death of the pious pastor was a source of temporal advantage to his Church. The fury of the populace having obtained this victim, cooled a little,—and the proconsul, who was not a personal enemy of the Christians, suspended all inquisition, and was willing to be ignorant of the existence of any Christians around him.

The second persecution under this emperor, of which we have any accounts, took place among the churches of Lyons (Lugdunum) and Vienne, A.D. 177. The fanatical rage of the people in these cities resembled, if it did not exceed, that of the people of Smyrna; and there was here also the additional circumstance, that the superior officers of government were infected with this fury. The outbreakings of the rage of the people appeared gradually to increase in violence, and the Christians were reviled and ill-treated whenever they appeared in public, and were plundered in their houses. At length the best-known were seized, and brought before the government. When they declared themselves Christians, they were thrown into prison, as they could not be tried immediately, in consequence of the absence of the governor, that is to say, the legatus, or lieutenant. On his return, he instantly began an inquisition, accompanied by the use of tortures, not only to force the Christians to a recantation, but also to wring from them an avowal of the truth with regard to the horrible accusations of unnatural practices, which were commonly reported against them. In Smyrna, the proconsul seems to have been too sensible to lend his ear to such reports. A young man of some rank, by name Bettius Pagatus, although not arrested as a Christian, felt himself bound, on hearing of these accusations, to come forward in attestation of the innocence of his brethren. He asked a hearing, in which he promised to show that nothing criminal took place at the meetings of the Christians; but the legate, without giving him a hearing, only asked if he were a Christian, and on his clear declaration of this, he was cast into prison as the advocate of the Christians (παρακλητος Χριστιανων). Some heathen slaves, under fear of the torture, declared their Christian masters guilty of the crimes which vague rumours laid to their charge. Little as such a declaration was worth, fanaticism was eager to receive it as an evidence of truth, and the people felt that every cruelty

was now justifiable. Neither kindred, age, nor sex, were spared. The stedfastness and tranquillity of many of these Christians under the most exquisite tortures, showed plainly, to use the words of the account given by the Church, "how they were bedewed and strengthened by the waters of life, which flow forth from the heart of Christ, and that nothing is terrible where the love of God exists, nor painful, where the glory of Christ dwells." Pothinus, the bishop of the community of Lyons, a man of ninety years of age, weak from infirmity and sickness, but filled with youthful vigour from his zeal to give testimony to the truth, was dragged before the tribunal. The legate asked him, "Who is the God of the Christians?" and received the answer which such an inquirer deserved—"You will know him if you prove yourself worthy of such knowledge." All who stood around the tribunal, were now eager to pour out their wrath upon the venerable old man. Half breathless he was cast into prison, where he died in two days. It was of no use now to yield and recant; those who did were thrown into prison, not as Christians, but as being guilty of the crimes which were laid to the charge of Christians—an accusation which probably was supported on the strength of such crimes having been sometimes confessed in the agonies of torture. Many died in a dark dungeon, the terrors of which many inventions were contrived to augment, while the wretched prisoner was condemned to endure the extremities of hunger and thirst; on the other hand, to use the expressions of the Church, "Many who suffered such severe torments, that it would have seemed impossible for the greatest care to enable them to survive, lived on in the dungeon, deserted by human care, but so strengthened in body and soul by the Lord, that they were able to inspirit and comfort their comrades." It happened "by the grace of God, who wills not the death of a sinner, but delights in his repentance," that the persuasions of these heroes of the faith wrought deeply on many of those, who had yielded and denied their faith, and "their Mother the Church had the great joy of receiving again out of the prison as living members, those whom she had cut off as dead."

As the number of the prisoners was considerable, and there were among them *Roman citizens* who could not be tried in the province, the legate thought it best, in regard to all of them, to send his report to Rome, and await the emperor's decision. The imperial rescript was to this effect, "that those who re-

canted should be set free, and the rest beheaded." It is evident here, that Marcus Aurelius thought on this matter with Trajan, and was far from giving credit to the accusations against Christians. The legate first cited before his tribunal all those, who had been prevailed on to recant during the first inquisition, and were awaiting in the dungeon the decision of their fate. It was, of course, fully expected that they would repeat their denial of the faith, and so obtain their freedom; but the indignation and astonishment of the multitude can scarcely be conceived, when many among them uttered a stedfast confession of their faith, and by so doing signed their own death-warrant. Those alone, says the Church, remained apart from us, who retained no vestige of their faith, nor had ever put on the wedding-garment of the Lord, (that feeling of faith working through love by which communion with God is made known,) and such only as had no fear of God, and had already scandalized their religion by their conduct. The legate executed those among the prisoners who had the rights of Roman citizens by the sword, although he caused Attalus, one of the number, in violation of the laws, to be tortured in various ways, and then thrown to wild beasts, merely to gratify the violence of the people; and when Attalus had endured all the punishments, he allowed the death-blow to be inflicted with the sword. The rest were thrown to wild beasts. Two of the converts, Ponticus, a stripling of fifteen, and a girl named Blandina, whom they endeavoured to frighten by making them witness all the severest sufferings of their companions, excited only general astonishment, at what the power of God could effect in such weak and tender vessels. We allow that these effects do not always proceed from the Spirit of God; most extraordinary effects, we know from history, are often produced by the power of the human will, animated by the feverish intoxication of enthusiasm, which is capable of extinguishing so many of the tender weaknesses of human nature. But haughtiness and pride usually accompany enthusiasm, while that which proceeds from the Spirit of God is distinguished by humility and love, and it was *this sign* which marked the martyrs of Lyons, as disciples of Jesus Christ. When their fellow Christians eagerly sought to show honour to such heroes of the faith, they refused it. Even when they had been conducted back to prison, after enduring repeated tortures, they did not, when they looked only to themselves, feel sure of the victory. As they were no

deluded enthusiasts, they felt strongly the struggle between the flesh and the spirit; and they most decidedly blamed those who honoured them with the name of "martyrs." "This name," they said, "belongs properly only to the true and righteous Witness[8], the First-born of the dead, the Prince of life; or, at least only to those martyrs whose witness to the truth Christ has already sealed by their death in he faith. We are merely poor and humble confessors of the faith."—With tears they implored the brethren fervently to pray for them, that they might being their work to a glorious conclusion. With tender love they received those of their companions, who had fallen away from the faith and were sent into their prison, and prayed to God with many tears, that He would restore these dead to life.—They looked even on their persecutors without one feeling of revenge, and only prayed to God that He would forgive those who had inflicted the most cruel tortures upon them. To the brethren they left behind them, not contention and wrath, but peace and joy, harmony and love.

The rage of the populace was satisfied with the mutilation of the body and its consumption on the funeral pile, but even then the ashes and the miserable remains that escaped the fire, were thrown into the waters of the neighbouring Rhone, that no remnant of these enemies of the gods might pollute the earth. Neither tears nor money were availing to the Christians, to procure the remains of martyrs so dear to them, for interment. The ignorant and blinded heathen thought they should thus bring the hope of Christians to confusion. "We shall now see," said they, "whether they will rise again, and whether God can help them, and save them from our hands." At length, however, as the Christians were so numerous, men became weary of bloodshed, and there still remained a branch of the Church even under this bitter persecution.

In places where only a few Christians dwelt, their existence was more easily concealed, and the rage of the people was not so easily attracted to them. The governors did not think it necessary to establish a search for them, except where individuals, from peculiar circumstances, made themselves notorious as enemies of the state religion, which happened about this time in a town not very far from Lyons, called Autun[9]. There was

[8] Μαρτυρ. Rev. i. 5.

[9] Augustodunum, Ædua.

no intention of persecuting the Christians there, as they were in small numbers, and but little known, when a Christian first attracted public notice to himself. The noisy multitude, with great solemnities, were celebrating a festival in honour of Cybele, whose worship appears to have come hither from Asia Minor, by the same route which Christianity afterwards followed, and she appears also to have been held in great respect at that time. An image of Cybele was carried round in one of her usual cars, and accompanied by a great multitude of people. All fell on their knees; but Symphorianus, a young man of high family, conceived that his conscience would not allow him to participate in this rite, and most probably, on being taken to task for it, took occasion to speak of the vanity of idolatry. He was instantly seized, and conducted before the governor Heraclius, a man of consular dignity, as a disturber of the public worship, and a seditious citizen. The governor said to him, "You are a Christian, I suppose. As far as I can judge, *you must have escaped our notice, for there are but a few followers of this sect here.*" He answered, "I am a Christian; I pray to the true God, who rules in heaven, but I cannot pray to idols; nay, if I were permitted, I would dash them to atoms, on my own responsibility." The governor, on this avowal, declared him guilty of a double crime, one crime against the religion, and another against the laws of the state; and, as neither threats nor promises could induce Symphorianus to abjure his faith, he was sentenced to be beheaded. As they led him to execution, his mother cried out to him, "My son, my son, keep the living God in thy heart; we cannot fear death, which leads so certainly to life; up, my son! let thy heart be up, and look to Him who rules on high. Thy life is not taken from thee to-day, but thou art conducted to a better. By a blessed exchange, my son, thou will pass this day to the life of heaven [1]."

If we may credit a report which has been current among Christians from the beginning of the third century, the emperor Marcus Aurelius was induced to adopt a different conduct

[1] The relation of the martyrdom of Symphorianus is so simple in essentials, so little deformed by the customary exaggerations of later days, and so suitable to the circumstances of the times, that we cannot doubt that it is entirely founded on facts, although perhaps in some passages it may be laboured and rhetorical. Every thing, however, conspires to prove that the event itself took place at a time not far distant from that of the persecution at Lyons and Vienne.

towards them by an event of a miraculous nature. During the war against the Marcomanni and the Quadi, A.D. 174, his army was reduced to great distress; a burning sun lay upon it in front, and it was then suffering the extremities of thirst from a drought, and expecting every instant in this unfavourable condition an attack of the enemy. In this extremity the twelfth legion, which consisted entirely of Christians, fell upon their knees. At their prayer a rain descended, which quenched the thirst of the Roman soldiers, and a storm arose which frightened the barbarians. The Roman army gained the victory, and in commemoration of this event the emperor gave the legion the name of Legio Fulminea. He ceased to persecute the Christians; and although he did not go so far as to receive their religion into the class of "religiones licitæ," he published an edict inflicting heavy penalties on those who accused Christians merely on the score of their religion[2]. Truth and falsehood are blended together in this narration. The emperor cannot have been induced to suspend his persecution of the Christians by any event of this date, for the persecution of Lyons took place three years later. The twelfth legion also had borne this name ever since the time of Augustus Cæsar[3]. The fact, that the Roman army was at that time saved from imminent danger by some such remarkable occurrence, is undeniable; and even the heathen acknowledged in it the hand of God. They ascribed it, however, not to the God of the Christians, nor to their prayers, but to their own gods, to their Jupiter, and to the prayers of the emperor or the army; not to mention a foolish superstition, which attributes the descent of the storm to the incantations of an Egyptian magician[4]. It is said that the prince prayed to Jupiter, stretching out his hands towards heaven, and saying, "This hand, which never yet shed human blood (for I reckon not the blood of the enemies of the gods), I stretch forth to thee!" There were pictures where he was represented praying, and the soldiers catching the rain in their helmets[5]. The emperor himself expresses this belief in a coin, where Jupiter is repre-

[2] Tertullian, Apologet. c. v.; and ad Scapulam, c. iv. Euseb. Lib. v. c. 5.

[3] Dio Cassius, in his table of the Legions existing in the time of the emperor Augustus, B. lv. ch. 23: το δωδεκατον (στρατοπεδον) το ἐν Καππαδοκιᾳ, το κεραυνοφορον. Also, in the fifteenth century, in the "notitia dignitatum Imperii Romani," § 27, the "præfectura legionis duodecimæ fulmineæ Melitenæ" is assigned to the Dux Armeniæ; the province of Melitena lying on the borders of Armenia and Cappadocia.

[4] Dio Cass. Lib. lxxi. p. 8.

[5] Themist. Orat. 15. τις ἡ βασιλικωτατη των ἀρετων, p. 191, ed. Hardouin.

sented as hurling down his lightning on the barbarians stretched upon the ground[6]; and perhaps, also, in his meditations at the end of the first book, where among the things for which he has to thank, not himself, but the gods, he names, in the last place, the occurrences among the Quadi[7]. It is also quite certain, that this remarkable event can have had no influence on the emperor's sentiments towards the Christians: but, at the same time, we have no right, on this account, to accuse the latter of a fiction. The thing is very easily explained; there may have been many Christians in the Legio Fulminea, for it is quite certain that only a part of the Christians condemned the profession of a soldier, and even though it may be difficult to imagine that the Christians generally (and especially under such an emperor as Marcus Aurelius) could withdraw themselves in the Roman army from participation in heathen ceremonies, yet under peculiar circumstances, this may have been the case. The Christian soldiers, under the pressure of this distress, took refuge, as they were accustomed to do, in prayer; they looked upon their deliverance as the answering of their prayers, and on their return home told their story to their fellow-believers. These naturally would not fail to remind the heathen of what they owed to the Christians whom they so persecuted. Claudius Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis, in Phrygia, might have heard it soon after the event from the mouths of the soldiers themselves of this legion, which returned to winter-quarters in Cappadocia, and he made use of it in an apology, which he addressed to this emperor, or in his other apologetic works[8]. As to the letter, to which Tertullian appeals, from Marcus Aurelius, apparently addressed to the Roman senate, in which he ascribes this deliverance to the Christian

[6] See Eckhel Numism. B. iii. 64.

[7] Τα ἐν Κουαδοις προς τῳ γρανουᾳ. It has here been supposed, that M. Aurelius indicates by these words the place in which he wrote this book; but as such an addition is only found in the third book, we may, perhaps, more aptly interpret these words as an allusion to some events in certain places, the mention of which has some connexion with what goes before.

[8] We must avow, that where Eusebius makes Apollinaris say, that the legion received the name of "fulminea" from this event, there is reason to suspect that he read his account in great haste, for it is difficult to think that so gross a blunder could have been made by a contemporary, living in the neighbourhood of the winter-quarters of that legion. Perhaps Apollinaris only says, that the emperor might now, with justice, call the legion "fulminea," or something of this sort. [Is not the distance of Cappadocia from the Quadi an objection to that part of Dr. Neander's explanation, which speaks of "winter-quarters"?—H. J. R.]

soldiers, if the words are accurately quoted, the above remarks will prove that the letter must be a forgery. The inquiry, however, is still open, whether the words are accurately cited, or whether the emperor using the word "soldiers" simply, Tertullian, putting his own interpretation upon it, makes him speak of *Christian* soldiers. At all events, Tertullian expresses himself doubtfully[9]. Another relation of this same event by Tertullian, will plainly show us how the Christians explained the religious deliverances of the heathen from their own belief, and not without reason—for they well knew *who* the unknown God was, whom the heathen worshipped under the name of Jupiter. These are his words: "Marcus Aurelius also, in the German expedition, received rain after a drought at the prayers of the Christian soldiery. How often have the droughts of countries been removed by our kneeling[1] and fasting! In such cases, even the people gave our God the honour; for they cried out to the God of gods, the only mighty one, under the name of Jupiter[2]."

There is the less reason to look for any definite cause for the cessation of the persecutions, because rage naturally in time expends itself; and besides, in this case, only a few years after the last bloody persecution in France, every thing at Rome was changed with the change in the government. The insignificance of the abandoned Commodus, who succeeded his father in the year 180, little as he can have cared for Christianity, must have been of advantage to the Christians in procuring for them a time of refreshment and repose after their sufferings under Marcus Aurelius. Marcia, who lived in illicit commerce with Commodus, was, we know not how, a friend to the Christians, and influenced

[9] Christianorum forte militum.

[1] Days of prayer and fasting, commonly joined together by the Christians.

[2] [Those who are desirous of further information on the subject of the Legio Fulminea, will do well to consult the remarks made on the early miracles by the bishop of London, in the notes to the volume of Sermons which he has lately published. See also Mosheim, cent. ii. part 1. § 10. Jortin is flippant on the subject as usual, and Gibbon sneers at the Christians, as usual also; but in all the writers whom I have consulted, I find that the conclusion is nearly similar to that drawn by Neander, which seems indeed to be the only reasonable one. They all admit the fact to be undeniable, but they mostly deny that any miraculous interposition is due to the prayers of the Christians. Why, however, the account of the Christians is not at least as credible as that of the heathen, who attribute a miracle to Jupiter, Mr. Gibbon leaves us to make out for ourselves. See also the works of Mr. Moyle, where this question is discussed in a very elaborate manner. Moyle's Works, vol. ii. p. 81—390. Mr. Moyle, however, does not admit some of the facts assumed by the explanation of Dr. Neander.—H. J. R.]

the emperor in their favour. The law which we cited above from Tertullian, as favourable to the Christians, may have proceeded from this emperor, who was well inclined to them, and have been falsely attributed to the latter years of his predecessor. There were really events in the reign of Commodus, in which the working of such a law has been supposed visible. One is, however, led to inquire whether the conclusion as to the existence of the law from these events is not a hasty one, and whether it does not proceed from a mistake. It certainly does appear in the highest degree improbable, that accusations against the Christians should have been received just as before, the Christians sentenced to death by Trajan's law, and yet their accusers, at the same time, have been capitally punished! An example will, perhaps, clearly illustrate this. Apollonius, a Roman senator, having been accused before the Præfectus urbis as a Christian, his accuser was instantly sentenced to death, and executed; but Apollonius himself, having most courageously avowed his faith before the senate, was also beheaded by a decree of that body. This is the tale: but Jerome, who can hardly have mistaken the words of Eusebius, and is likely to have a more accurate knowledge on the matter, says, that this accuser was the slave of Apollonius, and that this is proved by the ignominious punishment which he suffered, his legs being broken previous to his execution (suffringi crura). He was, therefore, executed, not as an accuser of a Christian, but as a slave who was faithless to his master. From hasty conclusions on such circumstances, it is possible that the story of a law favourable to Christianity may have derived its origin. As, therefore, this emperor most probably did not alter the condition of Christians by any express edict, as the law of Trajan had never been expressly repealed, and as all depended entirely on the change in the emperor's sentiments, the situation of Christians must then have been very precarious. They were constantly exposed to persecution from any governor, who might individually be hostile to Christianity. Thus the proconsul of Asia Minor, Arrius Antoninus, began a persecution, but a great multitude of Christians from the town in which the persecution began, flocked to the tribunal in order to deter the proconsul from this measure by their numbers, a consummation they might fairly hope for under a government, where the persecution proceeded from individuals, and not from the imperial throne. The proconsul was really frightened, and contenting himself with sentencing a few to death,

he said to the rest, "As for you, miserable creatures! if you choose to die, you have rocks to dash yourselves from, and ropes to hang yourselves with[3]!" Irenæus, who wrote during this reign, says that the Christians frequented the imperial court, and that they were partakers in all the usual advantages of the Roman empire, that they might go by land and by sea wherever they were inclined[4]; and yet this same Irenæus also affirms that the Church at all times, from which he does not except those in which he wrote, was constantly sending many martyrs to the Father in heaven[5]. This apparent contradiction is easily solved by the above remarks on the nature of the persecutions in this reign.

The political storms which followed the murder of Commodus, A.D. 192; the civil war between Pescennius Niger from the East, Clodius Albinus from Gaul, and Septimius Severus, which ended in the sovereignty of the latter, like all other public calamities, could not be favourable to the Christians. In these political convulsions the fury of the populace, or the malice of individual governors, had many opportunities of wreaking vengeance on the Christians. Clement of Alexandria, who wrote shortly after the death of Commodus, says, "We see daily many martyrs burnt, crucified, and beheaded before our eyes[6]." When Septimius Severus had obtained the victory, and found himself in secure possession of the empire, he showed himself favourable towards the Christians, and it is very possible that this disposition may have arisen from the circumstance to which Tertullian attributes it, viz. that Proculus, a Christian slave, had cured him of an illness; and that he took Proculus to the palace, and always kept him near him. He knew that men and women of the highest rank in Rome, senators and the wives of senators, were Christians, and he protected them against popular fury. As, however, the old laws had never been repealed, severe persecutions might take place in particular districts—as for example in proconsular Africa

[3] We are acquainted with two proconsuls of Asia Minor of this name in the second century, Antoninus Pius, who was afterwards emperor, and his grandfather, as well as a third during the reign of Commodus. Æl. Lampridii Vitæ Commodi, c. vi. and vii. We are naturally inclined to suppose it the contemporary of Tertullian, for otherwise he would give one to understand that he was speaking of an older one. We learn from Lampridius, that this proconsul was in great favour with the people. It was, perhaps, to court popular applause that he persecuted the Christians.

[4] Lib. iv. c. Hæres. c. 30.

[5] Lib. iv. c. 33. v. 9.

[6] Lib. ii. Stromat. p. 414.

—as we may see in many of the works of Tertullian, written during this very period. The festivals in honour of the emperor, at which the Christians attracted attention by withdrawing from them (see above), gave an opportunity for these persecutions. There was besides a law enacted by this emperor, A.D. 202, in which conversion to Christianity, as well as to Judaism, was forbidden under heavy penalties; but then this law presupposed that the old laws against Christianity had now generally fallen much into disuse. Inasmuch as this law, it is probable, opposed only the *further* extension of Christianity, and inasmuch as it does not expressly condemn all Christians as such, it implies some relaxation of the older laws. And yet, coming from an emperor who had hitherto shown himself personally favourable to the Christians, this distinct declaration must have excited the spirit of persecution still more against them. In many places[7] the persecutions were so sore, that they were believed a token of the speedy appearance of Antichrist. In Egypt and in proconsular Africa, this was especially the case, but these persecutions were certainly not general. It happened now in several districts that many Christians and Christian Churches purchased for themselves, from the higher state-officers, permission for the free exercise of their religion, and for holding their assemblies. But this measure did not give universal satisfaction; in some cases the Christians thought it derogatory to the honour of their name, and in others it only served to excite the cupidity of avaricious officers, and to induce them to begin new persecutions for the sake of extorting money[8]. The Christians continued in this condition throughout the reign of the capricious Caracalla; although cruel as he was, he did not set on foot any particular persecution against them. All depended on the individual characters of the governors; many sought expedients to save the lives of the Christians brought before them without a violation of the laws; others treated them with violence, either from personal enmity, or to gratify the popular voice; and others again contented themselves with keeping to the very letter of Trajan's law. Tertullian in his letter to a persecutor of Christianity, the proconsul Scapula, tells him that he might fulfil all that the law required from his office, without indulging in cruelty, if he would *only use the sword against the Christians according to the provisions of the original law*, as the Præses of Mauritania, and that of Leon, in Spain, were still in the habit of doing.

[7] Euseb. ii. 7.

[8] Tertullian, de Fuga in Persecut.

We shall now relate a few characteristic anecdotes connected with the history of the persecutions of these times. Some Christians from the town of Scillita, in Numidia, were brought before the tribunal of the proconsul Saturninus, A.D. 200. He said to them, "You may receive pardon from our emperors (Severus and Caracalla), if you will only return in good earnest to our gods." One of them, by name Speratus, answered, "We have done no evil to any man, we have spoken no evil against any man; nay, for all the wrongs which you have inflicted on us, we have only thanked you. We praise for all his dispensations the true Lord and King." The proconsul replied, "We too are pious, and we swear by the genius of the emperor, our lord, and we pray for his welfare, which you must also do." On this Speratus said, "I know of no genius of the ruler of this earth, but I serve my God in heaven, whom no man hath ever seen, nor can see. I have never stolen any thing from any man; I pay scrupulously all the taxes and tributes which are due from me, for I acknowledge the emperor as my ruler, but I can worship only my Lord, the King of kings, the Lord of all nations." The proconsul upon this ordered the Christians to be reconducted to prison till the next day. On the next day, when they appeared again, and he was unable to persuade them, he granted them three days more for deliberation. Speratus, however, answered in the name of the rest, "I am a Christian, we are all Christians, and we will not depart from the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dispose of us as you will." They were now, as they had avowed themselves to be Christians, and refused to show the emperor the honour which was required from them, condemned to be beheaded. On receiving their sentence they thanked God, and on arriving at the place of execution they fell on their knees, and again thanked God.

A few years afterwards three young men, named Stevocatus, Saturninus, and Secundulus, and two young women, named Perpetua and Felicitas, were seized in Carthage, while they were all catechumens. Their confinement and their sufferings present many lovely traits of the power of Christian faith, united with Christian tenderness of disposition. Perpetua was a woman of two-and-twenty years of age, and the mother of a child, which was still hanging on her breast. Beside the common struggles of flesh and blood against the hand of death, she had other and tenderer feelings to contend with, those pure feelings of human nature which Christianity recognises in all their strength, and

which genuine Christianity even heightens, while at the same time it requires the sacrifice of them to the One to whom all must yield. The mother of Perpetua was a Christian, but her aged father was a heathen. Besides the bitterness of losing a beloved daughter, he feared the ignominy which her execution as a Christian would bring upon him. As soon as she was taken into custody, her aged father came to her to say, that she might recant. She pointed to a vessel which lay upon the ground—"Can I," said she, "call this vessel any thing else than what it really is?" "No." "Well, then," she added, "as little can I aver that I am not a Christian." In the meantime she was baptized, as it appears that spiritual persons in the execution of their official duty were able to buy free access to the prisoners from the keepers of the prisons at a very cheap rate; but in this case the purchase of such a permission may not have been necessary, as they were not then under such rigorous custody. Perpetua said, "The Spirit prompted me to ask *at my baptism* nothing else than patience." A few days after they were all thrown into the dungeon. "I was terrified," she said, "because I had never before been in such darkness. O what a wretched day! The stifling heat from the number of the prisoners, the rude treatment we suffered from the soldiers, and to add to all this, my anxiety for my child!" The deacons[9] who gave the communion to them in the dungeon, purchased for the Christian prisoners a better residence in the prison, where they were separated from other criminals. Perpetua now took her child to her breast in prison, and commended it to her mother; she comforted the rest, and felt herself revived by having her child near her. "The prison," said she, "now became a palace to me."

The report that they were about to be tried having reached her aged father, he hastened to her and said, "My daughter, pity my grey hairs, pity thy father, if I am worthy to be called thy father! I have brought thee up to the bloom of thy age; I have preferred thee to all thy brothers; give me not up then to such shame among men! Look upon thy mother and thy aunt! look upon

[9] ["Diacones qui nobis *ministrabant*." Acta Martyr. ap. Ruinart. p. 94. I suppose Dr. Neander to mean that they brought the *consecrated elements* to the Christians, a practice well known not to be unfrequent. See Mosheim, Hist. Eccles. Sec. ii. Part ii. cap. iv. § 12. et alib. See also Justin Martyr, Apolog. I. § 85. (Ed. Grabe. Oxon. 1700, p. 128.) and Hieronymi Epist. 4, near the end.—H. J. R.]

thy infant son, whose death must shortly follow thine! Lay aside thy haughty spirit, lest thou exterminate our race! not one of us can again speak with the freedom of a man, if thou come to such an end." As he spoke, he kissed his daughter's hand, and throwing himself at her feet, called her not his daughter, but his mistress. "The grey hairs of my father," says Perpetua, "gave me pain. I lamented that he alone, of all my family, would not rejoice in my sufferings." She said to him, "When I stand before the tribunal, God's will must come to pass! for remember, we stand not in our own power, but in that of God." When this decisive moment came, her father also approached, to try his last efforts with his daughter. The governor said to Perpetua, "Take pity on thy father's grey hairs, take pity on thy tender child. Offer sacrifices for the prosperity of the emperor." Perpetua: "That I cannot do." Gov.: "Art thou a Christian?" Perpetua: "I am a Christian." Her fate was now decided. "His unhappy age pained my heart," says Perpetua, "as deeply as if I myself were in his case." They were all condemned on the ensuing festival of Geta's accession[1] to be thrown to wild beasts, and thus afford a cruel sport to the soldiery and people. They returned to their prison rejoicing; the tenderness of a mother's feelings did not overwhelm Perpetua, she sent to her father for her child that she might give it suck, but the father would not part with it. Violent suffering[2] having come on Felicitas at her return to prison, the jailor said to her,—"If thou canst scarcely bear these sufferings, what wilt thou do when thou art cast before wild beasts? and yet thou despisest them by thy refusing to sacrifice!" She answered, "What I now suffer, I suffer myself, but then it will be another who will suffer for me, because I shall suffer for Him." As it was usual in those days, in compliance with some of the customs which had been retained from the times in which human sacrifices were offered to Baal, to clothe those condemned to die by wild beasts in priestly garments, they wished to dress the Christian men as priests of Saturn, and the women as priestesses of Ceres. Their free and Christian spirits, however, revolted against this. "We have come here voluntarily," said they, "that our freedom might not be taken away from us. We have given up our lives, that we might not be compelled to these practices." The heathens

[1] Natales Cæsaris.

[2] ["The pains of labour," according to the original Latin.—H. J. R.]

themselves recognised the justice of their demand, and gave up the point.

Before these martyrs received their death-blow, after being torn by the beasts, they mutually took leave of each other for the last time, with the brotherly kiss of Christian affection.

With the reign of Heliogabalus, A.D. 219, a more tranquil season for the Christian Church began, although the indulgence of this emperor towards the Christians proceeded from no virtuous motives. He was no follower of the old Roman religion, but was himself devoted to certain foreign rites, that is, to the Syrian worship of the sun, a service consisting of the most abominable impurities. He wished to establish this as the prevailing form of religion in the Roman empire, and to blend all others into it, and with this view he tolerated Christianity as well as other foreign religions. Had he been able to carry his intentions into execution, the Christians would certainly have been his most zealous opponents [2].

His successor, the noble and pious Alexander Severus, (from A.D. 212—235.) was a man of wholly different character from his vicious predecessor; and his favourable disposition towards Christianity and Christians, proceeded from entirely different grounds. The sensibilities of this excellent prince were alive to all that is good, and he felt a reverence for every thing connected with religion. In his religion he was addicted to the then prevailing fashion of electicism, and he included Christianity among those religions from which he drew his stores. He recognised Christ as a Divine Being, together with other gods; and in his *lararium*, or domestic chapel, where he offered his morning devotions, among the busts of those men whom he regarded as beings of a higher order, such as Apollonius of Tyana, and Orpheus, there was placed also a bust of Christ! Now this must have been with the intention of receiving Christ among the Roman gods. He was constantly in the habit of using our Saviour's saying, in Luke vi. 31; "What ye will that men should do unto you, do ye likewise unto them;" and he caused it to be engraved on the walls of his palace, and on public monuments. While Julia Mammæa, the mother of this emperor, who had great influence over him, was resident at Antioch, she sent for Origen, the great pastor of the Alexandrian Church, and

[2] Æl. Lamprid. Vit. c. 3. 6, 7. [See Gibbon, vol. i. ch. vi.—H. J. R.]

Origen, who was of all men the most capable of recommending Christianity to habits of mind quite foreign to it, no doubt made use of this opportunity to do so with her, and Julia Mammæa may, in return, have worked upon the disposition of her son. Since this emperor was, therefore, so favourably inclined to Christianity; since he gave the world to understand that he recognised the existence of a lawful association in the Christian community, by new-modelling the appointments to state offices, after the regulations in use among Christian Churches, and by assigning to the Christian Church in Rome a piece of ground, which they disputed with the corporation of cooks [or rather, perhaps, restaurateurs]; all this tends to show the more strongly with how great reluctance the Roman emperors published any new edicts in matters concerning religion; for, as far as we know, he enacted no law by which Christianity was received among the "religiones licitæ." Indeed, Domitius Ulpianus, the celebrated civilian in the reign of Alexander Severus, (for it was probably this same Domitius,) collected the rescripts of former emperors against the Christians[3] in his work "De Officio Proconsulis."

The rude Thracian, Maximinus, who after the murder of the excellent Alexander Severus, A.D. 235, raised himself to the imperial throne, hated the Christians because his predecessor had been on friendly terms with them, and especially persecuted those bishops who had been the most connected with Severus. (Euseb. vi. 28.) In many districts, as in Cappadocia and Pontus, desolating earthquakes assisted in waking again the fury of the populace against the Christians. Under such an emperor, this fury would have full play, and in many cases it was also backed by the governors of the provinces. But it was only in particular districts that the Christians were persecuted, and they were able to escape by flight into others; and yet this persecution, though less severe than those of former times, made a greater impression, because the long interval of repose had left men unprepared to expect hostile measures[4].

A more favourable season for Christians again appeared on the accession of Philip the Arabian, A.D. 244. This emperor, it is said, was a Christian himself[5]. It is expressly related, that when

[3] Lactant. Institut. Lib. v. c. xi.

[4] See the Epistle of Firmilianus Cæsariensis in Cyprian, No. 75, and Origen, Comment. in Matth. vol. iii. 857, ed. de la Rue.

[5] Eusebius uses the expression, κατεχει λογος, in his Church History; but in his Chronicle he expressly names him as the first Christian emperor.

he wished to join a Christian congregation on Easter-eve, the bishop [6] of the Church met him at the entrance, and declared to him, that in consequence of the crimes which he had committed [7], he could not be allowed to approach till he had submitted to the penance of the Church, and that the emperor really pledged himself to the observance of it. This narration, however, does not harmonise well with what we learn of this emperor from other sources. In all his public life, for instance, in the money which he coined, there is not a single trace of Christianity; but, on the contrary, he always appears as a follower of the heathen state religion. Origen, who was in communication with the royal family [8], and wrote his work against Celsus in this reign, gives us to understand, indeed, that the Christians were then in a very comfortable condition; but we do not find a single thing in him to induce us to believe that the ruler of the Roman empire was a Christian, although he had certainly some occasion to mention such a circumstance. It will, perhaps, be said, that the emperor kept concealed his conversion to Christianity from political grounds; but, then, it does not suit with this view, to suppose that he visited a Christian church, especially at such a time, and still less, that he submitted to the penance of the Church. We find, indeed, the first trace of the story of his conversion to Christianity in an author of reputation, who wrote in the time of Valerian, who reigned very shortly after Philip. Dionysius of Alexandria [9] says of Valerian, "He showed himself even better inclined towards the Christians than those who were themselves Christians." We cannot understand, by these words, any other emperors than Alexander Severus and this Philip; and the well-informed Dionysius apparently classes them together. Philip may, probably, have included Christianity in his religious eclecticism, and then an exaggerated report made him out a Christian. The murder of his predecessor, however, and much besides about him, corresponded very ill with the supposition of his Christianity; and in order to reconcile these conflicting accounts, the report added the fiction about Easter-eve.

Instead of dwelling longer on this exaggerated story, before we pass over to the next struggle of the Christian Church, we

[6] By a later tradition it would appear that it was Babylos, bishop of Antioch.

[7] This must have been an allusion to the murder of his predecessor, Gordianus.

[8] He wrote letters to the emperor and his wife Severa, which are now lost.

[9] Euseb. vii. 10.

shall consider the remarkable works of the great Christian pastor Origen, who wrote in these days, concerning the persecution which the Church had hitherto endured, its then external condition, and its future prospects. He says, in regard to the earlier persecutions[1], "Although the Christians, who were commanded not to defend themselves by violence against their enemies, complied with this tender and humane precept; yet that which they never could have obtained, however powerful they might have been, had they been permitted to go to war, *that they have received from God*, who has always *fought for them*, and who has at times imposed tranquillity *on those* who opposed them, and would extirpate their religion: for, as a kind of warning and memorial to them, that when they saw some few contend for their religion, they might become stronger, and despise death, a *few* (*so few, that they may easily be numbered*) have *at times* suffered death for the Christian religion[2]; and thus God has prevented a war of extermination against the whole body of Christians; for he wished their continuance, he wished that the whole earth should be filled with their salutary and most holy doctrine. And, on the other hand, that the weaker brethren might take breath, and be relieved from the fear of death, God cared for the believers, by so scattering, through his own mere will, all assaults upon them, that neither emperor nor governor, nor the multitude, should prevail against them further." He says, in reference to his own times, "God hath constantly caused the number of Christians to increase, their number is still daily on the increase, and he hath already given to them *the free exercise of their religion*[3], although a thousand obstacles opposed the propagation of the doctrine of Jesus in the world. But since it was God who willed that the doctrine of Jesus should become a blessing to the heathen, all the assaults of men against other Christians have been brought to shame. And the more the emperors, the governors, and the multitude, *have sought to oppress* the Christians, the *more powerful have these latter become*[4]." He says, that among the multitude of those who embraced Christianity, were also many rich people, many in high

[1] Lib. iii. p. 119. [p. 116. Ed. Spencer.]

[2] Ὀλιγοι κατα καιρους και σφοδρα εὐαριθμητοι ὑπερ της Χριστιανων θεοσεβειας τεθνηκασι.

[3] Ἤδη δε και παρρησιαν ἐπιδεδωκε.

[4] Lib. vii. p. 359.

offices, and rich and well-born women[5]; that now a Christian pastor might obtain honour and respect, but, nevertheless, that the contempt with which others treated him was greater than the reverence with which he was regarded by believers[6]. He remarks, that notwithstanding all this, even yet the horrible accusations against the Christians obtained belief with many, who abominated holding the slightest intercourse with Christians, even speaking to them[7]. He writes, that through God's will the persecutions against the Christians had now long since ceased; but casting a glance into futurity, he adds, that this tranquillity would readily cease in its turn, whenever the calumniators of Christianity should again have spread abroad the opinion, that the cause of the numerous seditions (during the later years of this emperor), was the great number of the Christians, who had increased so much from not being persecuted[8]. He foresaw also that the persecutions had not yet reached their limit, and that the opinion, "that the downfal of the state-religion, and that the irresistible propagation of Christianity, were bringing disaster on the Roman empire, would, sooner or later, again revive the flames of persecution;" but he adds, "when God wills, we enjoy in a wonderful manner peace in a world which hates us, and we confide in Him who says, 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' He has, indeed, overcome the world! Inasmuch, then, as He who hath overcome the world wills that we should overcome the world, since He hath received power from the Father to overcome the world, we confide in his victory. But if He wills that we should again contend and battle for the faith, let the adversaries come, and we will say to them: 'We are able to do all things through Him that makes us strong—Jesus Christ our Lord!'" He was persuaded that hereafter all other religions would fall to the ground, and Christianity alone would prevail, as even then it was constantly gaining more souls[9].

What the sharp-sighted Origen predicted, soon happened; nay, while he was writing this in Cæsarea of Palestine, it had already taken place in another district. In Alexandria, an enthusiast or an impostor, who appealed to special revelations, which he had individually received from the gods, excited the

[5] τινες των ἐν ἀξιωμασι, και γυναια τα ἀβρα και εὐγενη.
[6] Lib. iii. p. 120.
[7] Lib. vi. p. 302.
[8] Lib. iii. p. 123.
[9] Tom. viii. 436-7.

rage of the people against the Christians[1]. As it had often happened before, that a persecuting government had followed a favourable one, as Marcus Aurelius had followed Antoninus Pius, and Maximin the Thracian, Alexander Severus, so it happened now also, when Decius Trajanus, after conquering Philip the Arabian, A.D. 249, had ascended the imperial throne. It is exceedingly natural that when an emperor zealously devoted to Paganism, followed one favourable to the Christians, he should feel himself bound, on that very account, to renew with redoubled strictness and severity, and to execute most thoroughly the older laws, which had fallen into disuse, against the Christians, who, during his predecessor's reign, had increased so widely. And we can here also with Origen recognise an especial precaution of God's providence; since in the long interval of repose many Christians, unmindful of their call to combat for the faith, had suffered themselves to grow slothful, since so many, who were destitute of vital Christianity, had crept into the Christian Church, or remained in it because they were descended from Christian parents, it would seem that the power and truth of faith must be awakened and proved by some new terrible struggle, the Church at the same time purified, and the real and genuine members of it separated from the pretended. In many provinces the Christians had enjoyed an undisturbed repose of thirty years, in others even a longer time. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, on this account (in his Sermo de Lapsis), complains that this peace had had a soporific influence on a part of the Christians, and that much worldly-mindedness had taken root in consequence among both laity and clergy. The Church, therefore, needed again to go through the purifying influence of the fire. So Cyprian, after the first storm of persecution had subsided, taught his Church to view the matter.—"When the cause of the sickness," says he to his flock, "is once known, then the remedy for the wound may be found. The Lord wished to prove his people, because the course of life which God commands had been destroyed in the long time of our tranquillity. A divine chastisement hath, therefore, roused the Church, fast sinking as it then was, into sleep and carelessness. Although by our sins we deserved more, yet the merciful God has so managed that all which befel us appeared to be rather a trial than a persecution. While men forgot what

[1] Euseb. vi. 41.

the believers did in the time of the apostles, and what they ought always to do, they gave their minds, with insatiable desire, to the increase of their temporal possessions. Many of the bishops, who ought by example and exhortation to lead the rest, neglected their divine calling, and busied themselves with the administration of worldly affairs." Since such, therefore, was the state of many Churches, it is easy to see that a persecution, which in its first course seemed likely to be very severe, must have made a great impression on persons unaccustomed to persecution.

It was certainly the intention of the emperor *entirely to crush Christianity*. He ordered[2] (A.D. 250) strict inquiry to be made about all persons suspected of non-observance of the state religions—and Christians were to be required to comply with the ceremonies of the Roman state-religion. If they refused, threats, and afterwards tortures, were to be made use of, to induce them to give in. If they stood stedfast in the faith, then, especially against the bishops, whom the emperor hated the most, sentence of death was pronounced: but the intention was at first to try how far they could succeed with the Christians by commands, by threats, by persuasion, and light punishments; they proceeded gradually to more severe measures, and the persecution gradually extended itself into the provinces from the metropolis, where the presence of the emperor, a declared enemy of the Christians, made the persecution at first the most severe. Wherever the edict of the emperor was carried into execution, the first step was publicly to appoint a day, before which, all the Christians of any place were to appear before the magistrate, abjure their religion, and offer sacrifice. Those who fled their country before this day, escaped with the confiscation of their property, and a prohibition of their return, under the penalty of death. But with those who were unwilling to sacrifice at once their earthly possessions to a crown of glory in heaven, and waited for something that might open a middle path for them, when they did not appear of their own accord on the appointed day, the court of inquiry[3], composed of the magistrate and five of the principal citizens, began its operation. After repeated tortures, those who

[2] [V. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. vi. 39. Pearson, Annal. Cyprian. ad ann. 249, No. 12. H. J. R.]

[3] Cyprian, Ep. xl. (Ep. xliii. ed. Ox.) "Quinque primores illi, qui edicto nuper magistratibus fuerant copulati, ut fidem nostram subruerent." The expression "edicto" renders it hardly probable that this regulation was confined to Carthage.

remained stedfast were thrown into prison, where hunger and thirst were employed to weaken their resolution. It does not appear that the punishment of death was very commonly resorted to. Many magistrates, who were more interested in extorting money than in executing the laws, or who wished to spare the Christians, agreed with them, that although they really did not offer sacrifice, yet they would suffer a certificate (libellum) to be set forth, declaring that they had complied with the regulation of the edict [4]. Others, while they were anxious to escape the putting forth such a certificate, yet, without ever even appearing before the magistrates, obtained the entry of their names in the magisterial protocol, or register, among those who had been obedient to the edict. ([5] Acta facientes.) Many erred ignorantly, thinking that they remained true to their faith when they did nothing which was contrary to their religion, (neither offered sacrifice nor burnt incense, &c.) but only allowed others to say that they had done so. The Church, however, always condemned this as a tacit abjuration of their faith.

Let us now take a picture of the effects of this bloody persecution among the Christians in the large cities, such as Alexandria and Carthage, from the hands of Dionysius [6], the bishop of Alexandria, whose very words we are now about to quote. "All were thrown into consternation by this terrible edict, and many of the higher classes of citizens [7] presented themselves from fear immediately, partly of their own accord, partly brought by the public [8] necessity, which was imposed upon them, and partly as they were brought by their relations and friends. And as each was called upon by name, they approached the unholy sacrifices, *some of them* pale and trembling, not as if they were to *perform a sacrifice*, but as if they were to be themselves

[4] Those who received such certificates were called "Libellatici."

[5] Cyp. Ep. xxxi. "Qui acta fecissent, licet præsentes cum fierent non adfuissent —ut sic scriberentur mandando."

[6] Euseb. vi. 41.

[7] Οἱ περιφανέστεροι, the "personæ insignes," to whom the attention of the heathen was first turned, and who were in greater danger than all others.

[8] Οἱ δὲ δημοσιευοντες ὑπο των πραξεων ἠγοντο. I think these words are a translation of the Latin law-phrase, "Actis publicis conveniri." The translation of Rufinus also favours this supposition, as well as the antithesis of the passage.

[The Note of Valesius on this passage rather supports this interpretation, and is worth consulting. He makes it mean, that "some being in public offices, were obliged to appear at the reading of the edict."—H. J. R.]

victims slaughtered to the idols; so that the multitude around treated them with bitter scorn and ridicule, and it was clear to all that they were alike afraid, either to die or to sacrifice. Others, however, voluntarily ran up to the altars, boldly averring, that they never had been Christians—in whom the saying of our Lord was verified, that 'the rich can hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.' The rest of the Christians partly followed the example of these two classes of persons of condition—some fled, and others were arrested. Among these latter, some went as far as to endure the fixing of the chains and the arrest; others bore the confinement for a few days, and then abjured, even before they had been sent for to judgment: others, after enduring the tortures up to a certain degree, gave in; but the blessed and stedfast pillars of the Lord, who were strengthened by Him, and received might and stedfastness from Him, as they were worthy of their firm faith, and acted up to it, became wonderful witnesses of his kingdom." Among these, Dionysius mentions Dioscoros, a boy of fifteen years of age, who, by his excellent answers and his firmness under torture, extorted such admiration from the governor, that he let him go free, declaring to him that he gave his tender years time to repent.

There appeared in most districts glorious traits of Christian faithfulness and devotion to the cause. At Carthage, we read of a certain Numidicus, whom Cyprian, the bishop, took into the presbytery, because he had so highly distinguished himself during the persecution. After encouraging many others to a martyr's death, after seeing his own wife expire on the funeral pile, he was himself, half-burnt and almost crushed with stones, left for dead. His daughter sought the corpse of her father under the heap of stones, in order to bury him. How raptured must she have been to find some signs of life about him still, and to succeed in her dutiful attempt to revive him! A woman had been brought to the altar by her husband, and they compelled her to offer sacrifice by holding her hands, but she cried, "I did it not! I did it not!" and she was accordingly condemned to banishment[9]. We read of confessors of the faith at Carthage, who were in prison, and whom they had endeavoured for eight days to bring to recantation through heat, through hunger and thirst, but who still looked death by starvation in the face unmoved[1]. Some con-

[9] Cyprian, Ep. xviii.

[1] Ep. xxi. Luciani, ap. Cyprian.

fessors from Rome, who had endured a year's confinement, wrote to Cyprian thus[2]: "What can happen to a man more glorious and more blessed, than amidst tortures, and even in the sight of death, to acknowledge God the Lord, and with lacerated body, with a departing but a free spirit, to acknowledge Christ the Son of God, and to become a fellow-sufferer of Christ in the name of Christ. We have not yet shed our blood, but we are ready to shed it! Pray also, dearest Cyprian! that the Lord may daily more richly confirm and strengthen every one among us with the powers of his might, and that He, our great leader, may at length lead to the battle-field of the fight that is set before us, his warriors whom He hath hitherto practised, and proved in the camp of a prison. May He bestow upon us those divine arms, which never can be conquered[3]!"

The bishops were the especial objects of the emperor's hatred, and possibly it was only against them that the punishment of death was expressly decreed. At the very first outbreaking of the persecution, Fabianus, the bishop of Rome, suffered martyrdom. Many bishops, till the first fury of the persecution had subsided, retired from their communities, not from cowardice, but because, as their presence inflamed the fury of the heathen, they esteemed it their duty to secure the repose of their communities by a temporary absence, as well as by all means not inconsistent with their Christian faith and pastoral duties, to preserve their lives for the future service of their flocks, and of the Church. Among the number of those who retired for a season, was the bishop Cyprian: and although he was by many reproached as having done this from cowardice, yet his subsequent conduct clears him from this imputation, and the openness and the tranquillity of conscience with which he speaks of it, are creditable witnesses in his favour, when he writes thus to the Roman Church[4]: "Immediately on the first approach of trouble, when the people with loud outcries constantly demanded my death, I retired for a time, not so much from care for my own life, as for the public tranquillity of the brethren, that the tumult which had begun might not be further excited by my presence, which was offensive to the heathen[5]." He acted after the principle which he recommended in regard to all other persons also. "Therefore, the Lord com-

[2] Ep. xxvi.
[3] Ephes. vi. 11.
[4] Epist. xiv.; [Ep. xx. in Bishop Fell's edition. Oxford, 1682.—H. J. R.]
[5] De Lapsis.

manded us to yield and fly in case of persecution; He commanded this, and practised it himself. For as the martyr's crown comes from the grace of God, and can only be received when the proper time is come, so he denies not the faith, who, still remaining true to Christ, retires occasionally, but he waits his time." There was however certainly a difference in the case of ordinary Christians, and of one who had the administration of the pastoral office on his hands, and duties to fulfil towards the souls confided to his care; but even this Cyprian neglected not; he might fairly appeal to his Church and say, that though absent in body he had been present with them constantly in spirit, and sought to guide them by counsel and by deed, according to the commandments of the Lord[6]. The letters which he wrote from his retreat, through the means of clergy, who travelled about, and were connected with his Church, show with what right he could say this of himself, and with what anxiety he sought to preserve discipline and order in the Church, and how desirous he was, that the necessities of the poor, who were prevented by the persecution from plying their customary employments, should be attended to, and that the prisoners should be relieved by all possible means. The same principles of Christian resolution, which moved him to yield to the momentary danger, were shown in his exhortations to his Church, when in exhorting them to Christian stedfastness, he endeavoured to warn them against all enthusiastic and exaggerated feelings. He thus writes to his clergy[7] (Ep. iv.): "I pray you, not to allow your prudence and care for the maintenance of tranquillity to fail; for, although the brethren, in the spirit of love and charity, are desirous to visit those glorious confessors of the faith, whom the grace of God has rendered illustrious by such a glorious beginning, yet this must be done with precaution, and not in great numbers at a time, lest we provoke the jealousy of the heathen, and all access be forbidden; and so while we seek for much, we lose every thing. Take care also that due moderation be kept here for greater security, so that the individual priests who go to administer the communion to the confessors, and the deacons who accompany them, may change after some regular succession, because a change of persons, and a change in those who visit the confessors, will excite less jealousy; and in every thing we must gently and humbly, as becomes the servants of God, humour

[6] Ep. xiv. [Ep. xx. Ed. Ox.] [7] [Ep. v. Bishop Fell's edition.—H. J. R.]

the times, and provide for the safety and tranquillity of the Church." He desires his Church to consider this persecution as an exhortation to prayer (Ep. vii.). "Let each of us pray to God, not only for himself, but for all the brethren, as the Lord taught us to pray; who does not command each individual to pray for himself alone, but all generally for all. When the Lord shall see that we are humble and peaceable, united among ourselves, and rendered better by these present sufferings, then will He free us from the persecutions of the enemy."

By a comparison of the various letters of Cyprian, written at this time, with the letter of Dionysius of Alexandria, it appears probable that, without any further edicts of the emperor Decius, the persecution had gradually become more severe. As so many had shown weakness at the first threats, it was hoped that the Christians might easily be entirely crushed, without proceeding to extremities, if they could only manage to deprive them of their bishops, who were constantly inflaming their zeal for the faith. At first all the dealings with the Christians in this business were committed to those local authorities in the different provinces, who were the best acquainted with the individual citizens, and best knew how to set about the matter, and who would know how to discover the means most likely to work upon and influence each man according to his individual character and private relations; the most severe punishments at first made use of, were imprisonment and banishment. When, however, the heathen saw that the hopes excited by their success at first, were deceived, the proconsuls themselves took the thing into their own hands; and those, therefore, by whose firmness these hopes had been dispelled, were now far more harshly dealt with, in order to force them to give way, as the others had done. They tried hunger and thirst, exquisite and increasing tortures, and in some cases death, even on those who were not spiritual persons. It was, however, natural, that in the course of time people should grow weary of their fury, and their passion should gradually cool. It might also happen that the change in the provincial government, when the old proconsuls and præsides laid down their office in the beginning of the year 251, might be favourable to the Christians. At length Decius was called away from the persecution of the Christians, by more important political events, the rebellion in Macedonia, and the Gothic war. He himself lost his life in this war towards the end of the year. The tranquillity which this

change procured for the Christians, lasted also during a part of the following year 252, under the government of Gallus and Volusianus. But, a desolating pestilence, which having broken out under the former government, was now spreading itself gradually into all parts of the Roman empire, with droughts and famine in various districts, again excited, as usual, the fury of the populace against the Christians[8]. An imperial edict was published, requiring all Roman subjects to sacrifice to the gods, in order to obtain salvation from so great a public calamity[9]. Men were again struck by the numbers who withdrew themselves from these sacrifices, because they were Christians. Hence arose new persecutions, in order to increase the number of the sacrificers, and generally to further the interests of the old religion.

At the approach of this new persecution, Bishop Cyprian wrote a letter of exhortation[1] (Ep. lvi.) to the North-African Church of the Thibaritans, in which he thus expresses himself: "Let none of you, my beloved brethren, when he sees how our people are driven away and scattered from fear of the persecution, disquiet himself, because he no longer sees the brethren together, nor hears the bishops preach. We, who dare not shed blood, but are ready to allow our blood to be shed, cannot, at such a time, be collected together. Wheresoever, in those days, any one of the brethren may be separated for a while by the necessities of the time, and absent in body, not in spirit, let him not be agitated by the dreadfulness of that flight; and if he be obliged to retire and hide himself, let not the solitude of a desert place terrify him. He, whom Christ accompanies in his flight, is not alone; he is not alone, who preserving God's temple constantly, wheresoever he is, is not without God. And if in desert places, and on the mountains, a robber shall assault the fugitive, a wild beast attack him, or hunger, thirst, or cold destroy him; or if, when he passes over the sea in haste, the fury of the storm shall sink his vessel, yet Christ, in every place, beholds his warrior fighting!"

The bishops of the metropolis, under the very eyes of the emperor, were naturally the first objects of the persecution, for how could people hope to put down Christians in the provinces,

[8] See Cyprian's Defence of the Christians against the accusations of Demetrianus.

[9] Cypriani Epist. lv. ad Corrul. Sacrificia, quæ edicto proposito celebrare populus jubebatur.

[1] [Ep. lviii. ed. Ox. 1682.]

while they suffered their bishops to remain in Rome? Cornelius, who had entered on his office under Decius, at the danger of his life, was at first banished, and then condemned to death. Lucius, who had the Christian courage to succeed him in his office, at this time of danger, was soon also his follower in banishment and in martyrdom.

Nevertheless the war and the rebellion, with which Gallus was busied, prevented him from carrying through with vigour a general persecution of the Christians in the provinces, and these events, which ended with his murder, in the summer of the year 253, at length restored universal repose and tranquillity to the Christians.

The emperor Valerianus, in the first years of his reign, from 254, showed himself very favourable to the Christians, but from the year 257, he changed his conduct, and began to persecute them. The persecution, however, was at first by no means a bloody one, and only required the removal of teachers and pastors, and especially bishops, from their flocks. We have before observed the notion which in the former persecution prevailed among the heathen governors, that if they could first remove the bishops out of the way, they should have less difficulty in strangling Christianity; then the assembling of the congregations was forbidden, and it was hoped that thus their aim might be attained without bloodshed. The course of proceeding in this first persecution under this emperor we ascertain immediately by an inspection of the minutes of the trials of the bishops Cyprian and Dionysius[3]. The proconsul Paternus brought Cyprian before his tribunal, and said to him, "The emperors Valerianus and Galienus have sent me a rescript, in which they command that all those who do not observe the Roman religion, shall now take upon them the Roman ceremonies. I therefore ask what are you? what do you answer?" Cyprian: "I am a Christian and a bishop; I know no God but the one true God, who created the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them. This God we Christians serve; to this God we pray day and night for ourselves; for all mankind, and for the prosperity of the emperor himself." The proconsul: "Is this, then, your fixed resolution?" Cyprian: "A good resolution, which proceeds from the knowledge of God, can never

[3] [Passio Sti Cypriani.—H. J. R.]

change." The proconsul on this, in compliance with the imperial edict, pronounced a sentence of banishment upon him, and added instantly, "this rescript relates not only to the bishops, but also to the priests. I desire, therefore, to know from you, who the presbyters are who dwell in this city?" Cyprian: "Your laws have justly condemned the laying of informations; I cannot, therefore, give them up; but in the places over which they have authority, you will be able to find them." The proconsul: "I am speaking now of this place, and in this place, this very day, will I begin the search." Cyprian: "As our doctrine forbids men to give themselves up, and it is also contrary to your orders, therefore they cannot give themselves up; but if you seek them you will find them." The proconsul released him with a declaration, that the assembling of the Christians, be it where it might, and the visiting Christian places of interment (which usually inflamed the zeal of Christians,) were forbidden under pain of death. The intention was now wholly to separate the bishops from their churches, but the bond of the Spirit would not suffer itself to be broken by earthly power. We very soon after find the bishops and the clergy, and not only these, but laymen also, and even women and children, condemned, after being ill-treated and beaten, to imprisonment and to labour in the mines: we suppose they had been found at the graves, or in congregations. The bishop Cyprian, from Curubis, the place of his banishment, was most active in providing for their temporal and spiritual wants, and in proving, by words and deeds of love, his sympathy with them. While he sent large sums from his own revenues and from the church-chest, for their support, and for the relief of their distresses, he wrote thus to them (Ep. lxxvii.)[3]: "In the mines the body is not refreshed by bed and couches, but by the refreshment and the consolation of Christ. The limbs, weary through labour, lie upon the earth, but it is no punishment to lie there with Christ. Though the outward man be covered with filth, yet the inward man is the more purified by the Spirit of God. There is but little bread, but man lives not by bread alone, but by the word of God. There is but little clothing for the cold, but he who has put on Christ, hath clothing and

[3] [Ep. lxxvi. ed. Oxon, 1682. This is by a misprint in the edition here referred to made lxxxvi., but in the Index it is given as it should be, as the lxxvith.—H. J. R.]

ornament enough. * * * * Even in this, my dearest brethren, your faith can receive no injury,[4] that you are unable to celebrate the communion. You do celebrate the most glorious communion, you do bring God the most costly offering, for the Scripture says, 'The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a contrite heart God doth not despise.'" You bring yourselves as holy and pure offerings to God. Your example," he writes to the clergy, "the greater part of the Church has followed, who have confessed with you, and with you been crowned, being bound to you by the ties of the strongest love, so that prison and the mines could not separate them from you, and there are among you even girls and boys. How great now among you must be the strength of your victorious conscience! What a triumph in your hearts, to walk among the mines, with imprisoned body, but with a heart conscious of power, to know that Christ is among you, and delights himself in the patience of his servants, who tread in his footsteps and walk in his ways to the kingdom of eternity!"

The emperor must soon have found, that nothing could be accomplished by these measures. The local separation of the bishops could not break up their connexion with their Churches; by letters, by clergy travelling backwards and forwards, they were active among their people, as if they had been in the midst of them, and their exile only rendered them dearer to their Churches. Wherever they were banished, they collected a little congregation around them; in many places, where as yet no seed of the Gospel had been sown, the kingdom of God was first erected by these banished persons, whose lives, and not their lips alone gave witness to their faith. So the Bishop Dionysius was able to say of his banishment to Cephar, a remote place of Libya[5], "At first we were persecuted and stoned, but then not a few of the heathen left their idols and turned to God. By us the seed of the word was first brought thither; and, as if God had brought us thither only for that purpose, He led us away again as soon as we had fulfilled that purpose." Valerianus, therefore, believed that to suppress Christianity, he must resort to more decided and severe measures. In the following year, 258, appeared this edict:—"The bishops, priests, and deacons, shall immediately be put to

[4] [Dr. N. has here only paraphrased the original, "quod illic nunc *sacerdotibus Dei* facultas non datur efferendi et celebrandi sacrificia divina," and so throughout this passage the original is much abridged.—H. J. R.]

[5] Euseb. vii. 11.

death by the sword, the senators and knights shall lose their dignities and property, and if, after this, they remain Christians, they shall suffer the same punishment of death. Women of condition, after confiscation of their property, shall be banished; the Christians in the service of the imperial court, especially slaves and freedmen, who have formerly made profession of Christianity, or do so now, shall be considered as the property of the emperor, and shall be [6] distributed in chains to labour in the various imperial public works." We see by this rescript [7], that the emperor's peculiar object was, *to deprive the Christians of their clergy, and to stop the spread of Christianity among the higher orders.* He did not wish to use unnecessary cruelty; but clearly the people and the governors did not always abide by the spirit of these instructions, as we learn from some of the martyrdoms of this persecution, against the genuineness of which no cogent arguments can, upon the whole, be produced.

Sextus, the bishop of Rome, and four deacons of his Church, were the first who, in consequence of this edict, suffered martyrdom, on the 6th of August, A.D. 258.

The new governors in the provinces had in the interim recalled those who had been banished by their predecessors in office, and they allowed them in the retirement, in which they

[6] A various reading here gives the sense of *branded* besides. (See the next note.)

[7] The original rescript of the emperor to the senate, is found in Cyprian, Ep. lxxxii. ad Successum, (Ep. lxxx. ed. Ox.) "Ut episcopi et presbyteri et diacones in continenti animadvertantur, senatores vero et egregii viri et * (the second *et* is a spurious addition, for the *egregii viri* are the *equites* as the *senatores* are *clarissimi*) dignitate amissa etiam bonis spolientur, et si, ademptis facultatibus, Christiani esse perseveraverint, capite quoque mulctentur; matronæ vero, ademptis bonis, in exsilium relegentur; Cæsariani autem quicunque vel prius confessi fuerant vel nunc confessi fuerint, confiscentur et vincti in Cæsarianas possessiones descripti mittantur." Instead of *descripti* (allotted or distributed), there is a various reading; *scripti* or *inscripti, branded.* We see by the following passage in Pontius's Life of Cyprian, that in the persecutions of Decius, Christians had been branded on the forehead: "Tot confessores frontium notatarum secunda inscriptione signatos."—The "prima inscriptio" was the "inscriptio crucis," χαρακτηρ, σφραγις του σταυρου received in baptism. In the passage of Cyprian the collocation of the words rather favours the common reading.

* [I find the passage thus printed in both editions of Dr. Neander. It appears that the printer must have left out the words "equites Romani," which follow the second *et* in the passage of Cyprian. This will make Dr. Neander's remark in the parenthesis quite intelligible. But he may perhaps mean to condemn the words *equites Romani* also.—H. J. R.]

were obliged to remain, to await the decision of their fate by the new rescript which was expected from Rome. Cyprian kept himself at a small country place near Carthage, until he heard that he would be conducted to Utica, in order to receive his sentence from the proconsul, who happened then to be staying there. Like a true shepherd, he was most anxious to give his last testimony by word and by suffering in the presence of his own flock; and he, therefore, complied with the intreaties of his friends who urged him to retire till the return of the proconsul. From the place of his concealment, he wrote his last letter to his Church (Ep. lxxxiii)[8]. "I allowed myself to be persuaded to withdraw for a time, because it becomes the bishop, in that place where he is set over the Church of the Lord, to confess the Lord, that all the Church may be rendered glorious by the confession of their pastor. For whatsoever the confessing bishop declares in the moment of confession, that he declares by the inspiration of God from the mouths of all.—Let me, in this retired spot, await the return of the proconsul to Carthage, to hear from him, what the emperors have commanded in relation to the Christian bishops and laity, and to speak to him what the Lord in that hour will that I should speak. But you, dearly beloved brethren, keep peace and tranquillity in conformity with the discipline which you have always received at my hands, according to the commands of the Lord; let no one of you bring the brethren into trouble, nor give himself up of his own accord to the heathen. Every man must then only speak, when he is apprehended, for in that hour the Lord who dwells in us, speaks in us." When Cyprian, on the return of the proconsul on the 14th of September, received from his mouth the sentence of death, his last words were "God be thanked[9]."

This persecution ended with the reign of him from whom it proceeded. Valerianus, by the unfortunate issue of the war, having been taken prisoner by the Persians, A.D. 259, his son Gallienus, already joined in the government, obtained the undivided sovereignty. He was more indifferent than his father, as well with respect to all public affairs, as with regard to the maintenance of the state-religion. He instantly published an edict, by which he granted to the Christians the free exercise of their religion, and commanded that all the burial-grounds belonging to their Churches,

[8] Ep. lxxxi. ed. Oxon.

[9] He was condemned as an "inimicus Diis Romanis et sacris legibus." [So Pontius in Vita Cypr. p. 13. Comp. also the Passio Cypriani.—H. J. R.]

and the other houses and grounds, which had been confiscated under the foregoing government, should be restored to them. He thus recognised the *Christian Church as a legally existing corporate body*, for none but such a body could, according to the Roman constitution, possess a common property. As, however, Macrianus had set himself up for emperor in the East, and in Egypt, in these countries it was only till after his fall, in A.D. 261, that the toleration-edict of Gallienus could come into effect[1]. Hence, while the Christians in the West were already in the enjoyment of repose, persecutions may have lasted in those countries in compliance with the edict of Valerianus. Eusebius relates a remarkable instance of this, which took place at this time in Palestine. Marius, a Christian soldier at Cæsarea Stratonis, was to receive the place of a centurion. Just as the centurion's staff (the *vitis*), was about to be entrusted to him, another soldier, who had the next promise of this promotion, stepped forward and declared that, according to the old laws, Marius could not hold any Roman military rank, because he was a Christian, and did not sacrifice to the gods and to the emperor. On this they granted Marius a delay of three hours, in the course of which he must decide *whether he would remain a Christian*. In the meantime the bishop Theotecnus led him to the Church, he pointed on the one hand to the sword which the soldier bore upon his side, on the other to the book of the Gospel, which he laid before him. "He must choose between the two, between the military rank and the Gospel!" Marius, without hesitation, lifted up his right hand and laid hold of the Gospel. "Now," said the bishop, "hold fast on God, and mayest thou obtain what thou hast chosen. Depart in peace." After a most courageous confession he was beheaded.

The law of Gallienus must necessarily have wrought a change in the condition of the Christians, most essential in itself, and fraught with most important consequences. The important step, which many emperors, more favourable to Christianity than Gallienus, who can hardly have had any peculiar religious interest in the case, had never hazarded, was now made. Christianity had now become a "religio licita;" the Christian Church had now received a legal existence; and many a governor who, in former

[1] Eusebius, vii. 13, has preserved to us, not the original edict of this emperor, but the rescript, by which the edict was introduced also into Egypt, after the conquest of Macrian.

times, under the then existing laws, would have had no scruples in persecuting the Christians, would now dread laying his hands on a corporate body, constitutionally recognised. This was exactly shown in the case of Lucius Domitius Aurelianus, the next emperor but one to Gallienus, in the year 270. This emperor sprung from the lower orders; and educated in heathen superstition, had, from the beginning, scarcely any but hostile feelings towards the Christians; for he was not only most fanatically devoted to the eastern worship of the sun, with which he might easily have blended a toleration of many foreign sacra, but he was in every respect a blind supporter of the old heathen worship. The welfare of the state appeared to him to be most intimately connected with the proper performance of the old sacra. When, during the threatening danger of the war with the German tribes, some of the members of the Roman senate had proposed in that body, that, after the old custom, the sybilline books should be opened, and their counsel asked, some of the senators said that there was no need to take refuge there; the power of the emperor was so great, that there was no need to ask counsel of the gods. The matter dropt for this time, and was afterwards again taken up afresh. But the emperor, who might very well have heard of these transactions in the senate, expressed his displeasure, and wrote to these people thus: "[2] I wonder that you should have hesitated so long to open the sybilline books, as if you had been consulting in a Christian Church, and not in the temple of all the gods." He called upon them to support him by religious ceremonies of every kind; for it could be no shame to conquer with the help of the gods. He offered to defray all costs incurred by the offering of every kind of victim, and *also to give towards it prisoners from all nations, and thus also, human victims*[3]. We can easily perceive, from these circumstances, that this emperor was not disinclined to shed the blood of Christians to the honour of his gods; and that from the dictates of his own spirit, he would be disposed towards harsh and severe measures. In the first years of his reign, however, he undertook no persecution of the Christians. He even showed by his conduct on one occasion, in the third year of his reign, that he considered the

[2] These words seem to convey a suspicion, that there might be some Christians even among the senators themselves, and that they had influenced the deliberations.

[3] Flavius Vopisc. c. xx.

Christian Church as a legally existing corporation; for when a contention having arisen among the Christians of Antioch, who should be the bishop of that place, the Church appealed to the emperor himself, and requested that the bishop, Paulus of Samosata, who had already been displaced on account of his doctrinal opinions, but had hitherto found support in Zenobia, (who was now conquered by Aurelian), might be *compelled at last* to lay down his office, this emperor decided that *he*, *whom* the bishop of Rome, his court, recognised, should be the bishop.

It was in the year 275, when he was busied with the warlike preparations in Thrace, that he first determined (probably to show his thankfulness to the gods, who had hitherto, he thought, so favoured him, and to win their further favour) to banish all his scruples, and to proceed to extremities against the Christians, but he was murdered in a conspiracy before he could carry his plan into execution [4].

The Christian Church remained in this state of repose and tranquillity above forty years, and the number of Christians in this interval increased among all classes, but among the multitude of those who embraced Christianity at a time when it required no struggle to be and to remain a Christian, there certainly entered also into the Christian Church many counterfeit Christians, who brought with them heathenish crimes. The outward form of the Christian Church was also changed, in consequence of their greater prosperity, and in the large towns splendid churches succeeded the former modest and simple houses of assembly. The emperor Diocletian, who reigned from the year 284, at first alone, but from the year 286 in conjunction with Maximianus Herculius, showed himself, at least as far as external appearances go, no other than favourable to Christians, for the relations of the persecutions in the earlier years of this emperor's government, are at variance with credible historical documents, and are altogether unworthy of credit. Christians were employed in offices of importance in the imperial court; some were found among the eunuchs and chamberlains (cubicularii); from which

[4] Eusebius says in his Ecclesiastical History, that Aurelianus died at the very time that he was about to publish an edict against the Christians. In the book De Mortibus Persecutorum, the story runs, that the edict had been published, but that it could not reach the distant provinces of the empire before the death of the emperor. Other writers make the persecution already begun. The account of Eusebius, who says the least, is by far the most probable, and the other part of the story may have arisen from exaggeration.

however, we are not entitled to infer that the emperor had any particular partiality for the Christians; for there had been for a long time some Christians among the Cæsariani, and if at first only one of these was a Christian, yet he would probably use his influence, as well as that Lucius, who having obtained the confidence of the emperor, was made by him the Præpositus Cubiculariorum, to extend Christianity among the people of the court[5]. These Christians immediately around the emperor might also have great effect in rendering him favourable to their fellow-believers.

It was always a notion near the heart of the Roman statesman, that the old political glory of the Roman empire was closely dependent on the old state religion, and that the former could never be restored without the latter. As Diocletian, therefore, wished again to renew the former splendour of the Roman empire, it might appear to him necessary for that end, to restore the old religion, which was daily sinking into neglect, and to extirpate the un-Roman religion, which was constantly spreading wider and wider, and which threatened at last to attain an undivided sway in the world. In a later inscription, in which the emperor prides himself on the annihilation of Christianity, the Christians are accused of destroying the state[6]. In the edict by which Galerius, the instigator of the persecution, afterwards countermanded it, he declares that it had been the intention of the emperors to correct every thing after the old laws and the public constitution of the

[5] Theonas, bishop of Alexandria, who gave this Lucius much excellent advice as to the duties of his office, charges him particularly not to be lifted up and to pride himself, because many in the palace of the prince had been brought to a knowledge of the truth through him, but far rather to give God thanks that He had made him the instrument of a good work. But we cannot here determine with certainty that this emperor was Diocletian. At all events it is quite clear that the emperor, in whose court he was, was no Christian; it is not even clear, that he had any prevailing inclination to Christianity, but only that there were hopes of winning him over to the cause by means of his chamberlain. The Christians about the court were recommended to use the utmost precaution, not to offend the heathen emperor. If a Christian was appointed librarian, he was to take good care not to show any contempt for worldly knowledge and the old authors; he was to recognise the excellence of the poets, philosophers, orators, and historians of old, taking into consideration the condition under which they lived, but then he was sometimes to take an opportunity of praising the Scriptures, to mention Christ, and by degrees to hint that He is the only true God. *Insurgere poterit* Christi mentio, explicabitur *paullatim* ejus sola divinitas. Omnia hæc cum Christi adjutorio provenire possent. Galland. Bibl. Patr. T. iv.

[6] Christiani, qui rempublicam evertebant.

Roman state[7]. Persuaded as the emperor was of this, he cannot have been restrained from persecuting the Christians by any just notion of the general rights of man, of the limits of the power of the state in matters of conscience, nor by more just views of the nature of religion. This is proved by the principles which he declares in a law against the sect of the Manichees, A.D. 296, which was especially obnoxious to him on account of its being derived from his enemies the Persians. "The immortal gods," says he[8], "have, by their providence, ordained and established that which is true and good. Many wise and good men are united in the opinion that this must be maintained without alteration. These we dare not oppose, and no new religion ought to venture to blame the old; for it is an enormous crime to pull down that which our forefathers established, and which has dominion in the state[9]." Must not the principles here professed have made Diocletian an enemy and a persecutor of Christianity?

The grounds, however, on which, (according to the judgment of the book de Mortibus Persecutorum) the emperor afterwards opposed his son-in-law on their meeting at Nicomedia, which was just about to take place, might, perhaps, in conjunction with the personal influence of people immediately about him, have withheld him from a persecution of the Christians; namely, that the Christians had now long since become a legally existing religious society, that they were so widely spread, that so much blood would necessarily be shed, that the public tranquillity would immediately be disturbed, and that all former bloodshed had rather had the effect of furthering the progress of Christianity, than of repressing it. Although Diocletian wished to restore the old Roman religion, he would probably never have overcome these objections, had not a more powerful motive carried him on.

[7] Nos quidem volueramus juxta leges veteres et publicam disciplinam Romanorum cuncta corrigere.

[8] This edict, which was known to Hilarius, the author of the Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, bears every internal mark of genuineness, and one is at a loss to imagine any motive, which should induce either a Christian or a heathen to invent such an edict. The extension of the religion in Africa, which it declares, is not at all a matter of impossibility.

[9] Neque reprehendi a nova vetus religio deberet. Maximi enim criminis est retractare quæ semel ab antiquis tractata et definita sunt, statum et cursum tenent et possident.

The heathen must have seen the season of the downfall of their old temples, and of the dominion of Christianity, which they detested, daily approaching nearer and nearer, and they must have set all their engines to work to obtain this latter determination, (the determination to persecute Christianity). This last struggle of heathenism against Christianity would necessarily, from the very nature of things, become the most violent and passionate. The heathen party, to which statesmen and priests, and men who aspired to be philosophers, as Hierocles[1], belonged, required only a powerful instrument to obtain their ends. They found one in the son-in-law of Diocletian, the emperor Caius Galerius Maximianus. This prince had raised himself, by his military abilities, from a low condition; he had been educated in blind heathen superstition, and was devoted to it, and attached great virtue to sacrifices and auspices. When he made use of these in war, and Christian officers were present, they were accustomed, from the persuasion that the heathens in their idols worshipped evil spirits, which seduce men from God, to sign themselves with the cross in order to ward off the influence of evil spirits, by the presumed supernatural power of this token of Christ's victory over all the empire of evil. The heathen priests also agreed to this notion of the Christians, but on wholly different grounds, inasmuch as they said "that the gods were no longer present at the sacrifices, not because they feared the cross, but because this hostile and profane sign was hateful to them;" an argument which they may have used, because they believed it, or perhaps have made use of only as a pretence to excuse auguries and predictions that had failed, and to embitter the emperor still more against the Christians. By these, they said, the good fortune and success of all heathen "sacra" were prevented[2].

There had been, till now, many Christians in the army, both in the higher and lower ranks, and they had never been compelled to do any thing against their conscience. This is clearly shown from what Eusebius relates, as well as from a remarkable circumstance which, as we can determine with certainty from the name of the consul given in a narration prepared by eye-witnesses,

[1] Not the author of the Commentary on the Golden Verses.

[2] De Mortib. Persecut. c. x; comp. with Lactant. Institut. iv. c. 27. Constantin. in Euseb. Vit. Const. ii. 50. [In our own times the Papists at Naples have attributed the delay in the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius to the presence of heretics, i. e. English people.—H. J. R.]

took place in the year 295[3]. It is one of the instances of an absolute refusal of a part of the Christians to enter into military service, on the plea that it was, by its very nature, incompatible with their religion; instances which, although their force was weakened by many others on the opposite side of the question, might very easily serve as an argument to the enemies of Christianity, to support their assertion that Christianity was detrimental to a state. At Sevesta, in Numidia, a young man of the name of Maximilian was brought before the proconsul, as bound to serve in the army; as he entered, and was about to be measured, to see if he had the stature required, he declared at once, "I cannot be a soldier, I can do nothing wicked, I am a Christian!" The proconsul, without noticing his protestations, coolly ordered him to be measured, and when he was found to be of the standard height, the proconsul said to him, "Let them put the insignia of the military service round your neck, and become a soldier;" without taking any further notice of his profession of Christianity. The young man said, "I will bear no such badge, I bear already the badge of Christ, my God." The proconsul, who was an heathen, sarcastically threatened him, "I will send you instantly to your Christ." The young man said, "I hope you may, this would be a glory to me." The proconsul, without further debate, ordered them to put the soldier's leaden badge upon his neck. The young man struggled against this, and answered in the ardour of youthful faith indeed, but with some deficiency of Christian humility and consideration, "I will not take upon me the badge of the world's service; and if it be put upon me, I will break it, for it is unavailing. I cannot bear this leaden token about my neck, after once receiving the saving badge of our Lord Jesus, of whom ye know nothing, who died for us." The proconsul, though a cold heathen statesman, showed, nevertheless, humanity in this instance, by endeavouring to persuade the young man by kind arguments; he himself endeavoured to represent to him, that he might become a soldier without violating his duty as a Christian, that there were Christians, who performed military service without scruples, in the body-guards of all the four emperors, Diocletian, Maximianus Herculius, Constantius Chlorus, and Galerius. As, how-

[3] [This account is found in Ruinart. Acta Sinc. p. 299—302. See also Gibbon, ch. xvi. p. 680. 4to ed.—H. J. R.]

ever, this young man of one-and-twenty years of age would not submit his own conviction to the example of others, he was sentenced to death; yet in his sentence of death [4], no notice was taken of his Christianity, and his non-compliance with the duty of military service was alleged as the only ground. This is a clear proof, that the soldiers also might openly profess their Christianity, and that if they would only fulfil their other duties, it would not be expected of them to participate in heathen ceremonies.

But a few years after this occurrence the case was different. Religious and political reasons determined Galerius to banish from the army all those who would not offer sacrifices. An order to the army, that every soldier should offer sacrifices, could easily be procured by him. Possibly the festival of the fifteenth year, the nomination of Maximianus Herculius to the imperial dignity, the "dies natalis Cæsaris [5]," in the year 298, was selected for the purpose of issuing such a command to the army; for this time would be exactly adapted to the purpose, as sacrifices and feasts would be held for the celebration of the festival, in which all the soldiers might be compelled to participate. According to Eusebius, (viii. 4.) many gave up their military rank, both high and low left the service, that they might remain true to their faith. Only a few were sentenced to death; probably only in those cases, where other peculiar circumstances were added, so that they might find occasion, at least in appearance, not merely to cashier them as Christians, but also to punish them under a charge of high treason. Among people, who, in their honest indignation at the suspicion to which they were exposed, were unguarded in their language and other behaviour, it was not difficult to find such occasions, and to represent them, under the military code, as mutineers, deserving of punishment. An instance of this is afforded to us in the case of the centurion, Marcellus, at Tingi, in Africa (now Tangier).

When the festival in honour of the emperor, after the Pagan custom, was accompanied by sacrifices and banquets, the cen-

[4] Eo quod indevoto animo sacramentum militiæ recusaverit, gladio animadverti placuit.

[5] [The "dies natalis Cæsaris" was the accession-day. The accession of Diocletian took place A.D. 284, but it is a very disputed point whether Maximianus Herculius was associated with him during that year, or in the year 286. Tillemont. Hist. des Emp. vol. iv. p. 7, and 596, (2nd Ed.) decides for the later date, and is followed by Gibbon, ch. xiii.—H. J. R.]

turion, Marcellus, stood up from the soldiers' table, and, throwing down his centurion's wand, his belt, and his arms, he declared, "From this moment I cease to serve your emperors as a soldier. I despise praying to your gods of wood and stone, deaf and dumb idols. *If the condition of a soldier requires this, that one must offer sacrifice to the gods and to the emperors*, I throw away my wand and my belt, I renounce the colours, and I am a soldier no more." All was now put together,—that Marcellus had publicly cast away the military insignia, and that he had spoken, before the whole people, much that was injurious to the gods and the emperor,—and he was sentenced to death.

This was the first token of the persecution. Throughout many years, Diocletian could not be prevailed on to do more than this. But when Galerius met his old sick father-in-law, who had already designed shortly to lay aside the government, at Nicomedia in Bithynia, in the winter of the year 303, he made use of all his powers of persuasion, backed by many zealous heathens in state offices of importance, to obtain a general persecution against the Christians. At length Diocletian gave way, and a great heathen festival, the Permiralia, on the 2nd February, was selected as the time for the commencement of operations. With the first dawn of day, the beautiful church of this city was broken into, the copies of the Bible found in it were burnt, the whole church was given up to be plundered, and utterly destroyed. On the following day, an edict to the following effect was posted up:—"The assemblies of the Christians for divine service shall be forbidden, the Christian churches pulled down, and all copies of the Bible burnt; those who have offices of honour and dignity shall lose them, unless they abjure. In the judicial investigations, the torture may be applied against all Christians, of any rank whatsoever, and the Christians of lower ranks shall lose their rights as citizens and freemen, and Christian slaves, as long as they continue Christians, shall be incapable of receiving their freedom." How far the Christians of lower condition were to lose the enjoyment of their freedom, is certainly here not sufficiently defined, but considerable latitude is left in the application of this edict to individual cases. It is certain from the edict, by which the emperor Constantine afterwards annulled all the consequences of this persecution in the east, that, at times, free-born Christians were converted into slaves, and sentenced to those kinds of slave-labour, which were at once the lowest and the most despised, and

to which they would be the least adapted from their former habits of life[6]. (See Euseb. Vit. Constant. book ii. ch. 32, &c.).

A Christian, of respectable condition, allowed himself to be carried on, by a somewhat inconsiderate zeal, to violate that reverence towards the government, which the Gospel prescribes. He publicly tore down the edict, and tearing it to pieces, cried out, in a sarcastic manner, "Behold, these are new victories over the Goths and Sarmatians, which are posted up! The emperor treats the Christians, his own subjects, no otherwise than if they were the conquered Goths and Sarmatians!" This was a ground which the enemies of Christianity were glad to avail themselves of, that they might condemn him, not as a Christian, but as one who had injured the majesty of the emperor.

This edict must have made a more terrible impression from its having been promulgated in many provinces just about the time of the festival of Easter, and in many districts on the very festival itself[7]. When they attempted, by burning all the copies

[6] In order to understand the meaning of the edict as far as possible, we must compare the two imperfect and inaccurate statements given by Eusebius, H. E. viii. 2. and the writer de Mortib. as well as the translation of Rufinus. No positive interdict of assemblies for the worship of God is expressly given in any of these places; but the nature of the case shows that it was tacitly implied in the edict: but it is moreover clear, from credible and official documents relating to this first time of the persecution in Proconsular Africa, that such an interdict was positively expressed in the edict. The words of Eusebius, which have caused much dispute, are difficult enough: τους ἐν οἰκετιαις εἰ ἐτι ἐπιμενοιεν τῃ του Χριστιανισμου προθεσει, ἐλευθεριας στερισκεσθαι. By the words ἐν οἰκετιαις we cannot, according to the common use of language, understand anything but persons in the condition of servants, slaves. We must, therefore, if we wish to put any reasonable sense on the passage, seek for some other meaning for the word ἐλευθερια, than that which first offers itself. The words, "shall be deprived of their freedom," may mean, "shall be put into chains and into prison." Compare above the edict of Valerianus against the Cæsariani. But it is safest to follow Rufinus, who may have seen the original of the edict: "Si quis servorum permansisset Christianus, libertatem consequi non posset." If this be correct, the translation of Eusebius is very defective.

[7] Eusebius and Rufinus set the publication of it in the month of March, which suits perfectly with the time of its publication in the then imperial residence. In Egypt, (which also just suits,) it was published, according to Coptic accounts, on the first Pharmuth, *i. e.* according to Ideler's Tables, the twenty-seventh of March. See Zoëga Catalog. codd. Copt. Romæ, 1810. Fol. 25; or the fragments of the Coptic Acta Martyrum, edited by Georgi. Romæ, 1793. Præfat. 109. (where Georgi proposes a needless emendation,) and in other places also. But when these Coptic accounts, which are full of fabulous circumstances, make the persecution follow immediately on the conquest of the Persians, as Diocletian's expression of thanks to the Gods for his victory; we must conclude that this is an anachronism, unless the first persecution of the soldiers is confused with this second. The cause assigned

of the Bible, to annihilate Christianity, with its sources, for ever, they certainly made choice of a means which was more efficacious than the extirpation of the living witnesses of the faith among mankind; for their example only excited a greater number of followers. On the contrary, if they could succeed in annihilating all the copies of the Bible, they would by that means have suppressed the *very source* from which true Christianity and the life of the Church had constantly risen up, afresh and unconquerable. Let them execute as many preachers of the Gospel, bishops and clergy, as they would; nothing was done as long as this book, which could always form new teachers, remained to the Christians. Considered in itself, indeed, the transmission of Christianity was not necessarily dependent on the letter of Holy Writ. Inscribed, not in tables of stone, but in the living tablet of the heart, the Divine doctrine, once established in the consciences of men, by its own Divine power might maintain its ground, and make further progress; but as human nature is at present constituted, the testimony of history declares, that Christianity, separated from its source, the word of God, from which it may always be recalled to its purity, would soon be overwhelmed by the mixture of falsehood and corruption, and become so disguised, as not to be recognised. This means, therefore, after the laws of human calculation, was well chosen; if only the wilfulness of man could have defied the almighty power of God, who wished to preserve the treasure of the Holy Word as the best possession of man, and could have brought its deep-laid schemes to effect. But how could it ever be imagined possible, according to the usual rules of human calculation, to find and to annihilate, by human power, all the copies of the Scriptures, which were not only deposited in the churches, but were also in existence in so many private houses? We here trace that blind policy which the empire of lies always makes use of, while it expects that nothing can escape its search, and that it can annihilate by fire and sword, what is protected by a higher power! The blind zeal for the support of the old religion went so far in many cases, that the heathen would willingly see many of the most glorious monuments of their own literature perish with the writings of the Christians, those at least in which a testimony was raised against the super-

by these Coptic accounts for the persecution, namely, that a Christian metropolitan had set free the son of the Persian Sapor, who had been entrusted to him as an hostage, can hardly in any way be reconciled to what we know of history.

stition of the popular religion, which were constantly used by the Christians in their controversy against heathenism; and they would gladly have drawn up a whole index "Librorum prohibitorum," and "expurgandorum[8]." One is immediately led to suppose, that where people of this description, or those who would gladly earn imperial favour by doing too much rather than too little, were commonly to be found among the governors and magistrates of provinces; many acts of violence and cruelty must have been committed against the Christians, by the fulfilment of that first edict, in which the delivering up of the Holy Scriptures and the discontinuance of congregations were commanded, and especially since by this edict Christians of all classes were subject to judicial investigations with the use of tortures.

But many magistrates, who were free from this fanaticism, and this spirit of base flattery, which was ready to sacrifice all higher objects and who had more humane feelings, endeavoured, as far as possible, to soften the rigour of these measures, and acted with as much lukewarmness as they could without openly violating the imperial edict. They either suffered themselves to be deceived by the Christians, or put the means into their hands of evading the edict, and fulfilling it only in appearance. Bishop Mensurius, of Carthage, used the precaution to bring all the copies of the Scriptures from the churches of Carthage to his own house, to preserve them there, while he left in the churches only the writings of heretics. When the inquisitors came, they took these writings and went away satisfied. They were assuredly religious writings of the Christians, and in the edict nothing was said of what holy writings, and of what party among the Christians it meant to speak. But some senators of Carthage discovered the imposition to Annulinus, the proconsul, and required him to institute a search in the house of the bishop, where he would find all the writings. But the proconsul[9], who was willing to be deceived, would not comply with

[8] Arnobius, who wrote exactly about this time, says in book iii. ch. iv. "Not a few abhorred the work of Cicero. de Natura Deorum, and could not prevail on themselves to read a book, which contradicted their ancient prejudices." Others said, in the greatest indignation, that a "Senatus-consultum" ought to be published, that those writings might be annihilated, by which Christianity was confirmed, and the authority of antiquity was undermined. "Aboleantur ut hæc scripta, quibus Christiana religio comprobetur, et vetustatis opprimatur auctoritas."

[9] Augustin. brevicul. collat. c. Donatist. d. iii. c. 13. Optat. Milev. ed. du Pin. p. 174. [vol. i. p. 183. ed. Oberthür.—H. J. R.]

this request. When Secundus, another Numidian bishop, refused to deliver up the holy writings, the inquisitors asked him why he could not deliver up some useless extracts, or at least give them something, any thing he pleased[1]. With the same intention, probably, must the legate of the proconsul have asked the Numidian bishop Felix, as he did more than once, "Why then do you not give up your superfluous writings[2]?" So also in the case of Felix, the African bishop, when the Præfectus prætorio asked him, "Why dost thou not deliver up the holy writings? or perhaps thou hast none:" it is evident enough that he meant to put the latter assertion into his mouth[3].

In the conduct of the Christians at this critical time, we find the opposite results which, under such circumstances, the different inclinations and imperfections of human nature are apt to bring about: some in the dread of martyrdom and death, gave up their copies of the Bible, which were then burnt in the public market-place; these men were excommunicated under the name of traditores: others,—of which we find examples more particularly in North Africa, where an enthusiastic disposition was natural to the people,—without any necessity, but in a blind zeal, into the composition of which something of earthly warmth entered, gave themselves up to death by declaring that they were Christians, that they had holy writings in their possession, but that nothing should induce them to give them up; or else they rejected with scorn the means of evasion proffered by governors of humane feelings: in this latter case, we ought to give high honour to a tender conscientiousness, which did not act thus out of a delusive enthusiasm to become martyrs, but because they held it unchristian to deceive in this manner, or because it appeared to them a tacit denial of the faith, if they delivered up these writings to the heathen, and allowed them to think that these were the Holy Scriptures of the Christians. Others believed it to be their duty to remain true to their faith with the simplicity of doves, and with Christian prudence to accommodate themselves to the times. They used every precaution which was not incompatible with the profession of Christianity,

[1] Aliqua ἐκβολα aut quodcunque.

[2] "Quare Scripturas non tradis supervacuas?" is, perhaps, intentionally ambiguous, so that the words might be understood to mean that the Christian writings in general were something useless.

[3] See the Acta Felicis in Ruinart.

to save from danger their own lives, and at the same time, the copies of the Scriptures; and in order to divert the jealousy of the heathen, they endeavoured to temper the violent zeal of their brethren. It was likely enough that these men should be condemned by the other party, as men with whom the fear of man and human considerations had too much weight, and as cowardly traitors to the faith—a feeling which proved in after-days the source of many convulsing struggles in the North African Church. The prudence, however, of this party in the Church, at least had this advantage, that it withdrew from the fanatical fury of the people many copies of the Bible, which otherwise would have been a prey to the flames.

We shall now, as we have before done, consider some individual traits of Christian faith and courage, as they are told in credible accounts. In a country town of Numidia, a body of Christians, among whom was a boy of very tender age, were seized in the house of a reader, where they were assembled for Scriptural instruction, and for the celebration of the communion. They were led away to Carthage to the tribunal of the proconsul, singing on the road songs of praise to God. Torture was employed on the greater part of these, in order to wring an avowal from all. In the midst of his torments one of them cried out, "Ye sin, unhappy men, ye sin, ye punish the innocent, we are no murderers, we have deceived no man; God have mercy on thee. I thank thee, God! and give me strength to suffer for thy name! Free thy servant from the slavery of this world, I thank thee, and yet I am unable to thank thee[4]. To the glory of God! I thank the God of the kingdom. The eternal, the incorruptible kingdom is at hand: oh! Lord Christ, we are Christians, we are thy servants, Thou art our hope!" On his praying thus, the proconsul said to him, "You ought to have obeyed the imperial edict;" and he answered with a spirit full of power, though his body was weak and exhausted, "I now revere only the law of God which I have learnt. For this law will I die, in this law do I become perfect, and besides it there is no other." Another in the midst of the torture prayed thus: "Help me, O Christ! I pray Thee, have pity on me; keep my soul, preserve my spirit, that I may not be brought to confusion. O give me strength to suffer." To the reader in whose house the assemblages had taken place, the proconsul said, "You ought not to have received them."

[4] "[Zur Herrlichkeit."—NEANDER. Ad gloriam. Act. Sat.]

He replied, "I could not decline to receive my brethren." The proconsul: "But the imperial edict ought to have outweighed these considerations." The reader: "God is more than the emperor." The proconsul: "Have you then Holy Scriptures in your house?" The martyr: "Yes, I have them, but it is in my heart." There was among the prisoners a girl named Victoria, whose father and brother were still heathens. Her brother, Fortunatianus, took care to be present to move her to an abjuration, and thus obtain her freedom. When she stedfastly avowed that she was a Christian, her brother gave out that she was of unsound mind; but she declared, "It is my firm and stedfast conviction, I have never changed." When the proconsul asked her whether she would go with her brother, she said, "No, for I am a Christian, and they are my brethren who obey God's commands." The proconsul thought that he should easily frighten the boy Hilarianus by threats alone, but even in this boy the power of God showed that it was mighty. "Do what you will," he said, "I am a Christian[5]."

When the persecution had once begun, it was impossible to stop half-way. If these measures failed, they must go further. The first step towards attacking the Christians was the most difficult to make, the second followed quickly upon it. There were also now many additional circumstances of a peculiar nature, which cast a disadvantageous light on Christianity, or at least, might be made use of to do so. A fire having broken out in the imperial palace at Nicomedia, it was natural enough that this circumstance should have been attributed to the revengeful spirit of the Christians, and the accusation might have still been true, without attaching any general disgrace to the whole Christian Church. Among so numerous a body as the Christians, there might very likely be many who allowed themselves to be carried away by passion, which they would palliate under the semblance of religion, *so far* as to forget what manner of spirit they ought to be of as disciples of Christ. It is certain, however, that they were unable to prove any thing of the sort

[5] The sources from which these accounts are derived are the "Acta Saturnini Dativi et aliorum in Africa." See Baluz. Miscell. vol. ii. and Ruinart, and du Pin in the collection above quoted. These writings have not descended to us in their simple, original state, but with a preface, interspersed remarks, and a conclusion, which were the work of some Donatist; but it is clear that the groundwork of the whole is the "Acta Proconsularia."

against the Christians. The impassioned author of the work on the judgments which befel the persecutors, says, that Galerius himself caused the fire, in order to be able to accuse the Christians of the crime; but his authority is insufficient to render this credible. Constantine attributed the fire to lightning, and sees in it a judgment of God. The truth is, as Eusebius justly confesses, that we do not know the real cause; it was enough that the Christians were accused of a conspiracy against the emperor, and that many of them were arrested without any distinction as to whom suspicion could attach to or not. Most terrible tortures were used in order to obtain a confession, but to no purpose. Many were burnt, beheaded, or drowned. It is true that fourteen days after, a second fire broke out, which was very soon extinguished, and that this may make it more probable that the first was intentional[6].

Seditions, which soon after arose in Armenia and Syria, again excited political jealousy towards the Christians; to this the clergy would, of course, as the heads of the party, be more especially obnoxious, and hence, under this pretence, an imperial edict was issued, "that all the clergy should be seized and put into chains;" the consequence of which was that the prisons were soon filled with clergy. Many circumstances conspire to show how ready men were to charge the Christians with political crimes; and on the other hand, they did not use all the precautions they might have done to avoid pretences for such charges as men wished to lay against them. A young Egyptian, when the Roman proconsul, at Cæsarea in Palestine, where he was arrested, enquired, "What was his country?" answered: "Jerusalem, which is where the sun rises, the land of the pious."—The Roman, who probably scarcely knew of the existence of the earthly Jerusalem, unless perchance he knew it by its Roman name Ælia Capitolina, and who knew still less about the heavenly Jerusalem, imagined nothing else than that the Christians had founded a town somewhere in the east, from which they meant to raise a sedition. The thing seemed to him of great importance, and

[6] Lactantius de Mortib. relates this circumstance, but no other writer mentions it. But Lactantius, who probably was at that time resident in Nicomedia, would know these things more circumstantially than any one besides. But it is quite possible, we admit, that he should have been deceived by some report then prevalent in the city.

accordingly he set on foot many inquiries, accompanied by the use of torture[7]. A priest of the name of Procopius, of Palestine, on being required to offer sacrifices, declared that he acknowledged only one God, to whom we must bring such sacrifices as he commands. When on this they required him to offer his libation to the four rulers of the state, the two Augusti and the two Cæsars, he replied, merely to show that men must worship only one God as Lord, by the Homeric verse, *οὐκ ἀγαθον πολυκοιρανιη*, &c. It appears, however, to have been taken up in a political sense, and to have been construed into a crime, as a calumny on the reigning tetrarchy[8].

When the prisons were thus filled with Christian clergy, a new edict appeared, ordering that those among the prisoners who offered sacrifice should be set free, and the rest compelled by all means to sacrifice. And at last, in the year 304, appeared the fourth and most severe edict, which made the same regulation in regard to all Christians[9]. In the towns, in which the edict was carried into effect in all its rigour, it was proclaimed through all the streets, that all the men, women, and children should repair to the temples. Lists were formed, and they were called over by name; all were carefully examined at the town-gates, and those who were known as Christians were detained. In Alexandria even the heathens themselves hid the persecuted Christians in their houses, and many would rather sacrifice their property and their freedom than betray those who had taken refuge with them[1]. The punishment of death was not expressly pronounced against the Christians, but an edict which proclaimed that the Christians *should be compelled* by every means to offer sacrifice, was surely more calculated than a merely unconditional death-warrant against all confessors of the faith, to render them the victims of all the cruelty which the fanaticism of a governor, or his adulation of the emperor, might tempt him to inflict. Every one was perfectly aware that, let him go as far as he would against the Christians, he incurred no responsibility by it. The persecutors already believed in their blindness, that they were able to triumph over Christianity and suppress it; already in inscriptions the titles of honour of the emperors were augmented

[7] Euseb. de Martyribus Palæstinæ, c. xi. [8] Ibid. c. i. [9] Ibid. c. iii.
[1] Athanasii Hist. Arianor. ad Monachos, § 64.

by the annihilation of Christianity and the restoration of the worship of the gods: "amplificato per orientem et occidentem imperio Romano, et nomine Christianorum deleto, qui rempublicam evertebant. Superstitione Christiana ubique deleta et cultu Deorum propagato." At the very time, however, at which they were indulging in these feelings of triumph, the circumstances were already prepared by Providence, from which an entire change in the condition of the Christians was about to result.

One of the four rulers, Constantius Chlorus, to whom, under the title of Cæsar, the dominion of Gaul, Britain, and Spain was assigned, from his kind and humane character was not disposed to persecution. Hence, although not decidedly a Christian, he was yet avowedly a friend to Christianity and to Christians. We may suppose that he really, as Eusebius says, acknowledged the futility of heathenism, and was a thorough Monotheist, without being a Christian, or that, like Alexander Severus, he was an eclectic in his religion, which is more probable. To those around him, who proved themselves true to their faith as Christians, he showed especial regard, and placed great confidence in them; for he used to say, "that he who was untrue to his God would be far less likely to be true to his prince;" although the anecdote which Eusebius relates of his method of trying their faith does not appear probable. As he could not exactly show himself, in his character of Cæsar, disobedient to the edict issued by the Augusti, he had some churches pulled down for the sake of appearances. In Gaul, where he himself usually resided, the Christians enjoyed perfect repose and freedom in the midst of their persecutions in other provinces[2]. In Spain he might not be able to effect as much, but certainly in none of his provinces was there a persecution of the same character as those in other districts. This prince, so favourable to the Christians, was nevertheless able to serve them more effectually, when on the resignation of Diocletian and Herculius in the year 305, he was raised from the dignity of Cæsar to that of Augustus, in conjunction with Galerius.

But, on the other hand, there entered into the number of the Cæsars a person whose blind heathenish superstition and cruelty

[2] This is stated by the writer De Mortib. Persecutor. c. 16; and in a letter of the Donatists to the emperor Constantinus, in which they begged for Gallic bishops as judges, on that very account. Optat. Milevit. de Schismate Donatistar. l. i. c. 22.

were in perfect keeping with the character of Galerius, who chose him as Cæsar; namely, Caius Galerius Valerius Maximinus. It was naturally to be expected that in the provinces assigned to him in Syria, and the adjoining parts of the Roman empire, and in Egypt, the persecutions should be renewed with fresh vigour. At times, however, men became weary of their own violence, and as their efforts proved unavailing, the execution of the imperial edict slackened of itself, the persecution slumbered, and the Christians began to enjoy a little repose; but when their enemies perceived that they had taken breath again, their anger arose afresh, because they felt that they had been unable to extinguish Christianity, and again set up heathenism, and then a new and more violent storm arose. Thus, after much bloodshed in the dominions of Maximinus, after his accession to the throne, a season of tranquillity, about the eighth year of the persecution, A.D. 308, arose for the Christians. Those condemned to labour in the mines began to experience milder treatment and more consideration. But again, on a sudden, the storm of persecution broke out, and startled the Christians from their temporary repose. A new and more strict imperial edict was issued to all the officers of government, from the highest to the lowest, both in the civil and the military service, requiring that the fallen temples of idolatrous worship should be restored, and that all free men and women, all slaves, and even little children, should be compelled to offer sacrifice, and eat the meats offered to idols. All the eatables exposed in the markets were to be sprinkled with water or with wine, which had been used in sacrifice, in order to force the Christians into contact with idolatry in their food. So far did despotism and fanaticism go! New bloodshed and new tortures were the consequence.

Then, again, a cessation took place till the beginning of the year 310. The Christians in the mines were enabled to assemble for the worship of God; but when the governor of the province, on coming thither once, had observed this, he made a report of it to the emperor. The prisoners were on this separated from one another, and compelled to more severe labour. Nine-and-thirty confessors, who after enduring a great deal, had obtained a respite from persecution, were at once beheaded. This was the last blood which was spilled in this persecution, while in the western countries the Christians had already earlier obtained repose.

The exciter of the persecution himself, the emperor Galerius, was softened by a severe and painful illness, the consequence of his debaucheries, and perhaps he may have thought that, after all, the God of the Christians might be a powerful being whose anger had punished him, and whom he was bound to appease. It might also strike him that all his sanguinary measures had failed in injuring the cause of Christianity. In the year 311, the remarkable edict appeared, by which this last sanguinary struggle of the Christian Church was ended in the Roman empire.

It was declared that the purpose of the emperors had been, to recall the Christians to the religion of their fathers; for in deserting this religion they had, according to their own fancies, created to themselves peculiar laws, and founded various sects. This is the reproach which was commonly made to Christians: See! ever since you have departed from the unity of the old traditional religion and the authority of our ancestors, you have completely followed your own devices, one innovation rising up after another, and hence comes that great variety of sects among you[3]. As, however, most of the Christians were now obstinately fixed in their opinions, and it was clearly perceived, that they could not honour their own God, and yet at the same time pay due homage to the gods, so the emperors wished to extend to them accustomed mercy, so that they might again be Christians, and hold their assemblies, but only on the condition that they abstain from contravening the discipline of the Roman state (ita ut ne quid contra disciplinam agant[4]). "They must also, after this clemency experienced at our hands, pray *to their God* for our prosperity, the prosperity of the state and their own, that the state may remain well maintained in all respects, and they may live quiet in their homes."

Now that we have considered the attack of mere external power on the Christian Church, we shall give a glance at those who opposed Christianity by their writings, men who often at the very time that Christianity was suffering from the arm of temporal

[3] The Latin words are: "Siquidem quadam ratione tanta eosdem Christianos voluntas (such caprice, ἰθελοθρησκεια) invasisset et tanta stultitia occupasset, ut non illa veterum instituta sequerentur, quæ forsitan primi parentes eorundem constituerant; sed pro arbitrio suo atque ut hisdem erat libitum, ita sibimet leges facerent, quas observarent et per diversa varios populos congregarent." Compare the objection in Clemens Alexandr. Stromat. vii. 753. [Sylb. p. 320. Potter, p. 866.]

[4] The emperor had apparently expressed himself more distinctly on this point in a rescript which has not been preserved.

power, attacked it on grounds which, though they were only objections in appearance, might be sufficient to blind the natural man, and with all the weapons which ridicule and sophistical acuteness could supply them.

Section I.—Part II.

The opposition which Christianity met with from Heathen Writings.

The hostile sentiments of the heathens towards Christianity were different, according to the difference of their philosophical and religious views. There entered then upon the contest the two classes of men, from two opposite points, who have never since ceased to combat *the pure Gospel.* These were the superstitious, to whom the honouring God in spirit and in truth was a stumbling-stone, and the light-minded unbeliever, who, unacquainted with all feelings of religious wants, was accustomed to laugh and to mock at every thing which proceeded from such feelings, whether rightly directed or mistaken, and at all which supposed such feelings and proposed to satisfy them. Such was Lucian. To him Christianity, like every other remarkable religious phenomenon, appeared only as a fit object for his sarcastic wit. Without giving himself the trouble to examine and to discriminate, he threw Christianity, superstition, and fanaticism into the same class. It is easy enough, in any system which lays deep hold on man's nature, to find out some side open to ridicule, if a man brings forward only that which is external in the system, abstracted from all its inward soul and meaning, and without either understanding or attempting to understand this soul and meaning. Can the richest wine escape receiving some taste from the impure vessels into which it is poured? How then shall the spiritual and godly influence, which strives to form the heart of man, not mingle itself, before it has fully effected its work, with some earthly failings, and thence exhibit some strange excrescences. When Christianity first attempted to act on human nature, as the new principle of life, to attract man's heart with a magnetic force, and to set all its powers in motion and ferment, we must expect to find that, before all had been brought into harmonious union, the existing tranquillity could not be destroyed without creating some jarring and discord.

He, therefore, who looked on Christianity with cold indifference, and the profane every-day feelings of worldly prudence, might easily here and there find objects for his satire. The Christian might indeed have profited by that ridicule, and have learned from the children of darkness to join the wisdom of the serpent with the meekness of the dove. In the end the scoffer brings himself to derision, because he ventures to pass sentence on the phenomena of a world, of which he has not the slightest conception, and which to his eyes, buried as they are in the films of the earth, is entirely closed.

Such was Lucian. He sought to bring forward all that is striking and remarkable in the external conduct and circumstances of Christians, which might serve for the object of his sarcastic raillery, without any deeper inquiry as to what the religion of the Christians really was. And yet even in that at which he scoffed, there was much which might have taught him to remark in Christianity no common power over the hearts of men, had he been capable of such serious impressions. The firm hope of eternal life, which taught them to meet death with tranquillity, their brotherly love one towards another, might have indicated to him some higher spirit which animated these men; but instead of this he treats it all as delusion, because many gave themselves up to death with something like fanatical enthusiasm. He scoffs at the notion of a crucified man having taught them to regard each other as brethren, the moment they should have abjured the gods of Greece; as if it were not just the most remarkable part of all this, that an obscure person in Jerusalem, who was deserted by every one, and executed as a criminal, should be able, a good century after his death, to cause such effects as Lucian, in his own time, saw extending in all directions, and in spite of every kind of persecution. How blinded must he have been to pass thus lightly over such a phenomenon! But men of his ready wit are apt to exert it with too great readiness on all subjects. They are able to illustrate every thing out of nothing; with their miserable "nil admirari," they can close their heart against all lofty impressions. With all his wit and keenness, with all his undeniably fine powers of observation in all that has no concern with the deeper impulses of man's spirit, he was a man of very little mind. But hear his own language[5]: "The wretched

[5] De morte Peregrini.

people have persuaded themselves that they are altogether immortal[6], and will live for ever; therefore they despise death, and many of them meet it of their own accord. Their first lawgiver[7] has persuaded them all also to regard one another as brethren, as soon as they have abjured the Grecian gods, and honouring their crucified Master, have begun to live according to his laws. They despise every thing heathen equally, and regard all but their own notions as profaneness, while they have yet embraced those notions without sufficient examination." He has no further accusation to make against them here, except the ease with which they allowed their benevolence towards their fellow-Christians to be abused by impostors, in which there may be much truth, (see below in the Third Section,) but there is nevertheless some exaggeration.

As for the self-righteous Stoics, the advocates of cold tranquillity, of an apathy founded on philosophical persuasion, they saw, as we have already observed in the case of the emperor Marcus Aurelius, in the religion of the people, nothing but blind fanaticism, because the influence which it exerted over man's spirit did not repose on philosophical grounds of demonstration and argument. Arrian, in his Diatribe, (B. iv. c. 7.) inquires "whether a man could not, by the inquiries of reason into the laws and order of the world, obtain *that* fearlessness which the Galileans attained by habit and by mad enthusiasm."

The Platonists were the nearest of all philosophers to Christianity, and they might find in their religious notions and their psychology many points of union with Christianity. Hence it happened that many of the early teachers of the Church had been prepared by the religious idealism of Platonism for Christianity, as a spiritual religion, and used their philosophical education afterwards in its service. But it was only natural that many, deeply rooted in their philosophical and religious system (which they considered perfect and finished once for all), should struggle

[6] He is passing a sarcasm on the doctrine of the resurrection, which, when St. Paul brought it forward at Athens, had met with the same reception.

[7] We must here understand Christ, if we judge from the context, and not St. Paul, for we never find Lucian distinguishing two different founders of Christianity from each other, and indeed it was impossible that with so superficial a view as his, he should make any such distinction. And here too he appears to be thinking of the exhortations of Christ to his disciples to love each other, of which he was likely to have heard.

the more eagerly against the new doctrines of Christianity, because in what they once possessed they had the complete advantage over the rest of the heathens. It would be a bitter draught to them, to drink the waters of humility and self-denial, as they must have done, had they consented to form their habits of thought on a revelation given as a matter of history. But there were besides decided differences in their habits of thought and those which the Gospel requires. They must renounce their superiority in religion, and unite themselves with the multitude[8] whom they despised, in *one faith*, and they must limit their love of speculation by the definite facts of a revelation! They must find pure truth in one only religion, and give up their fanciful heathenism, open as it was to speculation, and decked with all the graces of poetry and rhetoric! and exchange an imaginative polytheism for a dry and empty monotheism! Uninstructed Jews must become more to them than their godlike Plato! Instead of the god of their contemplative conception, their ὀν, from forth of which all existence eternally flows by a necessity, agreeably to the dictates of the Reason, from the highest world of spirits down to the very lowest ὑλη, that bounds all the varied developments of life, and stands on the extreme limit between existence and non-existence—instead of this god of their speculative conception [speculativer Begriffs-Gott] they were to recognise a personal God, who created all things from nothing, by the act of his own free-will, and who guides all things independently by his free providence, which looks not on the vast whole alone, but on each individual portion of it. The multitude, who are unable to raise themselves to abstract speculation, might have a god so human, but for a philosopher to take up with a god of the people! This consideration shows us plainly, that while the Platonists were attracted by many motives to the love of Christianity, on the other hand there were many feelings which stirred them up to bitter enmity *against a religion* which subjected them to humiliations, so opposite to all their habits of thought.

The first, who regularly took it on himself to write against Christianity, was Celsus, and most probably about the time that Marcus Aurelius persecuted Christianity with fire and sword. He gave his work the presumptuous title of "the Word of Truth" (Λογος Ἀληθης). It is the more requisite to enter at

[8] The πολλοι, the ὀχλος.

some length upon the character, the views, and the mode of argument of this person, because, in several respects, we find that he was the forerunner of antagonists of Christianity in general, or at least, of many of its peculiar doctrines, and that his spirit and notions have often made their appearance again; and lastly, because it is often shown with great clearness by his case, what appearance evangelical truth assumes in the eyes of the natural man, and how, in his judgment upon it, he makes his own blindness and poverty conspicuous.

Much doubt exists, in the first place, as to the person who goes under the name of Celsus. Origen, who wrote against him, goes on the supposition that he may have been Celsus the Epicurean, who lived in the reign of the Antonines, and was known as the friend of Lucian. But Origen had avowedly no other grounds for this supposition than the *sameness of the name*; and this, even supposing every thing to lead to the conclusion that the book really was written in the time of *that* Celsus, would be but a very weak argument, unless some proof of a conformity of views between this book and that Celsus could be established. It is of great importance to ascertain this point.

Lucian dedicated the Life of the Magician Alexander to this Celsus, which he wrote at his request. This suits well with the character of the Celsus who wrote against Christianity—for he too paid great attention to all the exhibitions of enchanters of that period[9], in order to be able, as such men always do, to class together the operations of a higher power, and the reveries of fanaticism, without any examination of their internal evidence. He might, therefore, to obtain materials for this comparison, and to use it in his zeal for the propagation of his would-be illumination of the world, wish to know more of this Alexander. The first Celsus had written a book against magic, which Lucian l. c. § 21. praises highly, and which was also known to Origen. The other Celsus expresses himself in more ways than one on the subject of magic. In Book i. p. 54, he says, after citing some miracles of our Saviour, "Well, then, let us grant that thou hast really performed these things!" He then proceeds to compare these miracles with the works of enchanters, who pledge themselves to the performance of far more extraordinary feats, with

[9] See the long passage, Lib. vii. 348, ed. Hoeschel, where he ventures to place the prophets of the Old Testament (as well as Christ himself, in other passages) in this same class.

the supernatural power of which the Egyptians would give a proof in the market-places for a few halfpence, such as exorcising evil spirits, charming away diseases, calling up the spirits of heroes, raising by enchantment splendid meals, and setting the most dead substance in motion, like a living thing. "Shall we, for the sake of these things, consider them as sons of God, or shall we say that they are the tricks of wretched and contemptible men?" In this passage, there is no trace of a belief in magic, as Origen imagined—for the language is not serious, but, as it often happens in Celsus, entirely sarcastic. He considers it all as mere trickery, by which the credulity of the multitude is easily imposed upon. For he had before doubted generally of the truth of the miracles of Jesus, without assigning any grounds for his disbelief. Where he sneeringly compares the endowments of animals with those of men, he says, among other things, "If men value themselves on their skill in magic, let them recollect that serpents and eagles have far more skill than they, and are more expert at miraculous cures," &c. Book iii. p. 226. [p. 221. ed. Spencer.] Now this, as Origen remarks, is as if Celsus was inclined to laugh at magic altogether. Nevertheless, when he brings forward the opinion of Dionysius, an Egyptian musician, (apparently with approbation,) that magic has no power over philosophers, but only over uneducated and corrupted persons, he appears to speak seriously. "It is the opinion of the *Platonists* of this day," says he, "that the magical operations of the higher powers of nature and demoniacal agency, which, according to their doctrine, belong to the empire of blind nature, the region of ὑλη, have influence over those only who also belong to this department, and not over those who have raised themselves up to the Divine Being, which is exalted far above all the powers of nature[1]."—Lucian praises Celsus for mildness and moderation—qualities of which we find no trace in his writings, from which he would rather appear a violent and passionate man. One feels, however, that Lucian's judgment of his friend may be a just one; for persons of a character whose tranquillity is not easily broken and disturbed, are often the most strongly excited when any thing opposes them, which not being reducible to the measure of common every-day things, creates an excitement, which they cannot comprehend, in the hearts of men.

It is not the opinion of Origen alone, that Celsus was an

[1] To the ἀγοητευτον.

Epicurean, but Lucian also calls him a zealous admirer of Epicurus. There is, however, but little in the work against Christianity, which wears even the appearance of an Epicurean habit of thought; and even this little, when accurately weighed, contains in it much that is irreconcileable with Epicureism. This was remarked by Origen, and somewhat staggered him in the notion that this Celsus was the author of the work. He offers three hypotheses, B. iii. p. 206. [?] between which people must decide on the subject: first, that the same person chose to conceal his real opinions, in order to oppose Christianity with more effect, because as an Epicurean, the partisans of all religions would be against him; secondly, that the Epicurean Celsus changed his opinions; or lastly, that it was a different Celsus who wrote the work. The first supposition is hardly natural, and the second quite gratuitous. It is, however, difficult to collect any connected system out of the writings of Celsus; for many contradictory opinions are maintained in them, and he himself appears in general, not as a serious and deep thinker, but as one whom the spirit of controversy drove to express much which he did not really mean; he often expresses himself sarcastically on things of serious import; and we find the same contradiction in him, which was common in his time, namely, that he sometimes played the enlightened philosopher, and at other times he maintained the old religion in downright earnest. It is, however, with all this, still undeniable, *that he has appropriated to himself many of the ideas of the then prevailing Platonic philosophy*; and yet it is certain, that he must not be confounded with the deeper school of Platonism. Among the notions he borrowed from Platonism, we must reckon that *of the soul's relation to God* (p. 8). Some representations, however, of a higher power, which slumbers in the souls of animals, and sometimes beams through them, (p. 223,) though somewhat opposite in expression, do not contradict this; for the Platonists themselves say of many of the old philosophers, especially Pythagoras, that they understood the language of animals. Again, he speaks of *the Supreme Existence*, (ὀν,) which nothing but the contemplation of the philosopher can reach (371. 374); *of the world*, as *the Son of the Supreme God*, a Θεος δευτερος, or Θεος γενητος, and in this he shows his ignorance of Christianity, for he charges the Christians with having borrowed this notion from the Platonists, and applied it to Christ. Undoubtedly, in other passages, he confuses God and the world,

(p. 18. 240,) and he does not always preserve the distinction between Θεος πρωτος and Θεος δευτερος. Again, we find the notions of *the stars as Divine beings*, ζωα, θεοι φανεροι, (240,) of *subordinate divinities in individual portions of the earth* and *of nature*, the popular gods, to which we must be subject as long as we belong to this earth, and to which we must show becoming reverence; and again the idea, that the *only imperishable portion of man's nature, his spirit, is derived immediately from the divinity* (205); *the idea of an* ὑλη, *which resists the divine formative principle*, and is the source of evil; the notion that evil is necessary in this world (426); and that of evil spirits, who *springing forth from the* ὑλη, oppose the Divine Being (313). The popular creed, interlarded with some such scraps of Platonic notions as these, brought forward with an air of the greatest pretension,—this was what Celsus opposed to that spirit, which animated and cheered the Christians even in the sight of death!

The charges which he brings against the Christians are full of contradictions. On the one hand he reproaches them with a blind belief[2], which despises all examination; that they have, as a watchword, for ever in their mouths the phrase[3]; "Believe, and you shall become blessed:" and that to all difficulties which are offered for their consideration, they reply that "With God all is possible;" for the idea of a self-satisfying faith, differing from the mythology of the people, as well as from a religion of philosophical dogmas, and independent of speculation, was utterly strange to the heathens, and he was unable to distinguish between faith and superstition. On the other hand he objected to them the number of their sects: "If all men should become Christians," he says, "they would soon cease to be so again. For at first when there were few of them, they all agreed; but now that they have become numerous, they separate from one another: every man wishes to found a new sect, and they agree now only in name[4]." And yet it was hardly consistent with the character of a religion, which required only a blind belief, to

[2] The πιστις ἀλογος.

[3] Just as the celebrated physician Galen, who lived about this time and a little later, and who, although a man of nobler and more profound mind than Celsus, had no perception of what the birth of the spirit is, made their λογους ἀναποδεικτους a subject of reproach to the Christians.

[4] Lib. iii. 120.

introduce so many various habits of thinking, and by consequence so many various sects. A blind faith, founded only on authority, would require uniformity of views and of the whole spiritual life. Whence then came all this variety, and these opposite developments of spiritual feelings? Had not Celsus been so superficial an observer, this contradiction must have struck him, and the attempt to solve the difficulty for himself, would have led him to the consideration of that which distinguishes Christianity from all former religious appearances.

Celsus knew that there were various sects among the Christians, but he did not give himself the trouble, as an honest enquirer after truth would have done, to separate them from one another. He had read much of the Scriptures, but in such a temper, as necessarily rendered him incapable of understanding their divine doctrines, because he sought in them only objects of ridicule and reprobation. He had classed the Christian sects together without discrimination, and he did the same with their writings; he set apocryphal and genuine just on the same footing. All was received with open arms by him, which could represent Christianity in a hateful point of view, and was gathered from such opposite quarters, as the fanciful dreams of the Gnostics, and the mere sensuous notions of the Anthropo-morphizing Chiliasts.

He sometimes reproaches them with having nothing which is to be found in all other religions;—no temples, no images, no altars; then again he calls them a miserable race of sense-bound, sense-loving people, who could recognise nothing but that which can be comprehended by the senses[5]. Under this point of view he declaims against them on the necessity of excluding and rejecting all sensuous notions, in order to contemplate God with the eye of the spirit. Now surely the enquiry might have struck him, How came these men, who are so completely dependent on sensuous representations, to arrive at so spiritual a worship of God? If he had asked himself this question, in answering it he must have traced the power of *that leaven*, which leavens man's nature *from within;* he would have seen in that covering of a sensible form, in which alone Christianity can at first enter the heart, the inward and higher spirit, which by degrees enlightens and ennobles this outward covering: he would have found that these despised and apparently sense-bound Christians had some higher

[5] Δειλον και φιλοσωματον γενος. vii. 366.

views and feelings, some *higher principle of life*, than all his fine-sounding phrases could bestow on him. How low and despicable, how groveling and earthly! with all his discourse about *the Spirit*, do the feelings of Celsus appear, when we compare them with the high-hearted feelings of the Christian martyrs of his time!

Celsus shows most aptly what the nature of the Gospel is, and that it can become a source of holiness to those alone who will look within and recognise their own sinfulness, and a source of true riches to those only who will become poor in spirit; he shows clearly, also, though in his own blindness he saw it not, what it was that prevented him from finding these advantages in the Gospel, when he says, "Those who invite us to other religions proclaim, 'Let him draw near, who is pure from all stains, who is conscious of no evil, and who lives in holiness and righteousness:' but hear what the invitation of the Christians is; 'Whosoever is a sinner, whosoever is weak or deficient, in a word, every one that is a wretch, him will the kingdom of God receive!' What then! was not Christ sent also for those who are pure from sin[6]?" Most assuredly not for those who know so little of their own sinfulness and of God's holiness, *as to imagine themselves pure and holy!* But Celsus, though in candour he cannot be compared with Nicodemus, was one of those to whom the Physician of our souls might say, "Art thou wise in thy own opinion, and knowest not this?" Of any spiritual power, which could triumph over the flesh and change its nature, he had no conception; had he only possessed an eye for experience, to whose testimony even then Justin Martyr could fairly appeal! but, alas! even with open eyes, man, in a certain condition of mind and spirit, may still be blind! The secret by which a sinner might become righteous was unknown to Celsus, though he still gives some testimony to the truth, when he confesses that no law and no punishments can accomplish this, the greatest of miracles. "Now it is manifest to every one," says he, "that those to whom sin has become a kind of second nature, no one can change by punishment; how far less then by mercy! for *wholly to change any man's nature is the most difficult of all things*[7]". Granted; but what if a little light had broken in upon the darkness of his mind, and shown him that the omnipotence of love and grace can effect, what the power of no punishment can accomplish!

[6] Lib. iii. 152. 3. τι δε τοις ἀναμαρτητοις οὐκ ἐπεμφθη;

[7] Lib. iii. 156.

We need not, therefore, be surprised, if with such sentiments as these, Celsus was unable to apprehend the real and distinguishing characteristic of the Christian life, humility. But as a Platonist he must have known, what indeed was foreign to the notions of the other ancient sages, who gave the greatest credit to a feeling of self-confidence, and of power, and who only used the word humility in a bad sense; he must have known that according to Plato, (B. iv. de Legg.) the word ταπεινοτης is capable of a good sense; although he was far from arriving at its true import. He brings a silly accusation against Christianity, that all its notions of humility arose only out of a misunderstanding of this passage. He made use of certain extravagances, of the counterfeit quality, which always is found beside the genuine one, in order to represent Christian humility as something weak and childish, as if the man of humility after the Christian pattern was one "who was constantly upon his knees, rolled upon the ground, put on wretched clothing, and covered himself with ashes[8]."

As he was a stranger to the true humility of human nature, so was he, also, to its true dignity; the feeling of the true elevation of the heart in God, which is as inseparable from true humility, as true humility is from it. Christianity alone can reconcile the two opposite qualities, self-abasement and elevation, lowliness and dignity, the *being nothing* and *becoming* every thing. This was to Celsus a secret completely closed; and thence it happens, that while on the one hand he charges the Christians with a disgusting and low self-abasement, on the other he reproached them for their immoderate pride, for daring to attribute to man such importance and dignity in the eyes of God. According to the prevailing views of antiquity, he imagined God's care bestowed on the universe, only as a whole; on man only as a portion of that whole, and not as an individual. What the Christians declared of God's special and particular Providence, of his care for the salvation of every individual, appeared to him, therefore, idle presumption. "All that is in the world was not created for man, any more than for lions and eagles, but it was created in order that the world, as a work of God, should constitute a perfect whole. God cares only for the whole, and this his Providence never deserts. This world never becomes worse,

[8] Lib. v. 203.

and God is not turning to it for the first time after a long interval. He angers himself as little for men, as for apes and flies[9]?" Such was the idol of human reason, with which the Christians were to content themselves! As a consistent Platonist, Celsus rejected every notion of final causes [alles Teleologische] in reference to God, and redemption could never enter into their system, because evil is necessary in this world, it has no beginning and will have no end, it remains the same as it always is, just as the nature of the universe constantly remains the same[1]. All travels round and round again in one perpetual circle. From this point Celsus makes that shallow objection against the doctrine of redemption, which after him has often been made against it by Deists and men of Pelagian sentiments, who, however, avoid speaking out so plainly as Celsus, or are less consistent[2]. It is this, "that God has made his work perfect once for all, and does not need, like a man, to mend it afterwards." This was perfectly consistent in Celsus, who considered the world as a whole, an independent whole, and denied moral freedom, but his fundamental error lay exactly in this perverted view of the relation of the world, and especially of reasonable creatures, to God.

A nobler and deeper spirit, than that of Celsus, animated another adversary of Christianity in the latter part of the third century. Porphyry, who wrote, perhaps, under the Emperor Diocletian, or somewhat earlier, was by birth a Phœnician, and recast an Oriental spirit in a Grecian mould. The story which Socrates the ecclesiastical historian relates of Porphyry, that he was originally a Christian, and only became prejudiced against Christianity from the ill-treatment which he received at the hands of some Christians, is too like the usual tales, by which men endeavour to explain an hatred of the truth from external causes, to deserve any credit; and, certainly, in what we know of Porphyry, no trace of a former belief in Christianity makes its appearance. For many of the notions of Porphyry, which approach or rather seem to approach Christianity, certainly cannot be quoted to prove this point. In part these notions proceed from that which Platonism has in common with Christianity, and are the more earnestly cited through his eagerness to set Paganism in a refined point of view, and to make it keep its ground against Christianity, and in part they serve to illustrate

[9] Lib. iv. 236. [1] Lib. iii. 211. [2] Lib. iv. 215.

the power which Christianity already exerted even on those spirits who rejected it. Had Porphyry not been the scholar of Plotinus, he might have endeavoured to engraft his theosophic notions on Christianity, and would have become a kind of Gnostic. The speculative turn (so opposed to the Oriental Gnosticism), which he received from Plotinus, and the engrafting of his theosophy on the Grecian Paganism, made him a bitter enemy of Christianity, which, recognising only one definite scheme as truth, has nothing *eclectic* in its nature.

Porphyry, in his letter to his wife Marcella, calls it the highest fruit of piety to worship the divinity after the manner of one's country[3]. Thus Christianity, not being the religion of his country, nay, opposing most resolutely that religion, must have been hated by him from the first. Whilst Porphyry, however, desired to maintain a religion which was at variance with many of the fundamental doctrines of his philosophy, he necessarily fell into many contradictions. He was a zealous defender of image-worship, and while he desired to maintain thoroughly the old popular religion, he was in fact maintaining the old superstition, because his spiritual exposition of the former was wholly unintelligible to the people, and yet he writes thus to his wife Marcella: "He is not so much an Atheist, who honours not the statues of the gods, as he who thinks of God after the manner of the multitude."

This Porphyry wrote a work against Christianity, in which he endeavoured to point out contradictions in Holy Writ, and contradictions between the Apostles, and especially those between the Apostles Peter and Paul[4]. He made use of the weak points which an arbitrary allegorical method of interpretation among a particular school of Christians laid open to him, to bring a general accusation against them, that they were obliged to resort to such arts in order to give a reasonable sense to the Old Testament[5], an accusation which came with a particularly good grace forsooth from Platonists, who had engrafted so many meanings on the old myths and symbols!

Another work of Porphyry is more accurately known to us than this, in which he also speaks of Christianity, and indirectly,

[3] Ep. ad Marcellam, ed Maj. where it is recommended τιμαν το θειον κατα τα πατρια.

[4] For which purpose he misapplied the well-known occurrences at Antioch. See Gal. ii.

[5] Euseb. vi. 19.

at least, endeavours to stem its propagation. This work professes to be a [6] system of theology, deduced from the pretended oracles of antiquity. He wished by means of this, as we have above remarked, to satisfy that longing after a system of religion founded on accredited Divine authority, which led men to embrace Christianity. There are even now remaining among the oracular responses, some which relate to Christianity, but on this head they speak very differently, according to the different notions of the priests who uttered them. As it was very common in the first century for women to embrace Christianity with zeal, while their husbands were entirely devoted to Paganism,—a man once enquired of Apollo[7], what god he must appease in order to lead his wife to renounce Christianity. The pretended Apollo, who knew the firmness of the Christians in their belief, answered the enquirer, that he might as well attempt to write on running water or to fly through the air, as to change the sentiments of his polluted and godless wife; let her continue to lament *her dead* God! Apollo, therefore, appears to justify the judges, who condemned Jesus to death, for a rebellion against Judaism; for, according to the usual opinion of the heathens [8] (see above), "the Jews knew more of God than the Christians."

Many heathens, from what they had heard of Christ, imagined that He might properly be ranked among the other gods, as an object of veneration, and asked the opinion of the oracle on this matter. It is worth remarking, that the priest who gave out the oracle, avoided saying any thing disrespectful of Christ himself. They replied [9], "The wise man knows that the soul rises immortal from out of the body, but the soul of that man is dis-

[6] περι της εκ λογιων φιλοσοφιας, a work of which many important fragments have been preserved to us in the XIIth Sermo curat. affect. of Theodoret, in Augustin's work de Civitate Dei (from a Latin translation, in which Augustin had read it), and last and chiefly in those two great literary treasures, the Preparat. Evang. and Demonstrat. Evangel. of Eusebius.

[7] Majus has most improperly concluded from this passage that Marcella, the wife of Porphyry, was a Christian. Porphyry is here quoting the enquiry of another person, as he often does in this book. The letter to Marcella contains nothing whatever to lead us to suppose that Marcella was a Christian, but much rather goes to prove the contrary.

[8] Augustin. de Civitate Dei, Lib. xix. c. 23.

[9] Euseb. Dem. Evang. Lib. iii. p. 134.

Οτι μεν αθανατη ψυχη μετα σωμα προβαινει,
Γιγνωσκει σοφιη τετιημενος, αλλα γε ψυχη
Ανερος ευσεβιη προφερεστερη εστιν ικεινου.

tinguished for its piety." When they further asked, why Christ had suffered death, the answer was, "To be subject to terrible torments is the fate of the body, but the souls of the pious go and take their station in the heavenly mansions [1]." Porphyry himself here avows that we must not calumniate Christ, but only deplore those who honour him as a God.—"That pious soul which is now raised to heaven, has been by a kind of destiny a source of error to those souls, which the gifts of the gods, and the knowledge of the eternal Jupiter, have never reached."

The series of writers who opposed the Gospel is closed by Hierocles, the governor of Bithynia, and afterwards of Alexandria, who chose for his attack on Christianity the season when persecution against the Christians was in full operation; a time which a man of tender feelings and noble sentiments would have been the last to choose. It was also peculiarly unbecoming in Hierocles to set himself up as a teacher of the Christians, for he was himself the founder of the persecution, and bore a principal share in it. And yet he lays pretence to an impartial love of truth, and kindly feelings towards the Christians, for he entitles his work "A truth-loving Discourse, addressed to the Christians [2]." He here brought forward again much which had been said by Celsus and Porphyry; and allowed himself to indulge in the most shameless falsehoods about the history of Christ. In order to deprive the Christians of their argument from the miracles of Christ, he carries on a comparison between Him and Apollonius of Tyana, allowing full credit to all the fables which the rhetorical Philostratus chose to narrate from unauthenticated sources, and from his own fancy; as for example, that he under-

[1] Σωμα μεν ἀδρανεσιν βασανοις αἰει προβεβληται·
Ψυχη δ' εὐσεβεων εἰς οὐρανιον πεδον ἱζει.

It may be that Porphyry has sometimes allowed himself to be deceived by oracles, forged by Jews of Alexandria or by other and older heathen Platonists. It is equally possible that such oracular responses as these might be forged under the name of the god or goddess by some other reasonable and thinking heathen; but by far the most natural supposition is, that they were really delivered on the above occasion. At all events it is quite inadmissible to suppose them forged by a Christian, for the Christians would never have had the tact to say so little of Christ. The example of these heathen responses may, perhaps, have induced the Christians to compose others. In that which Lactantius quotes (*Instit.* iv. 26), other expressions, and especially this, θνητος ἐην κατα σαρκα, σοφος τερατωδεσιν ἐργοις, betray a Christian author.

[2] Λογοι φιλαληθεις προς τους Χριστιανους.

stood the language of animals—while he takes it for granted that the apostles, uneducated and lying impostors, as Hierocles chose to say without proving it, told only untruths: "You regard," says he, "Christ as a God, because He restored a few blind men to sight, and did a few things of a similar kind, while Apollonius, who performed so many miracles is not on that account held by the Greeks as a God, but only as a man especially beloved by the gods." Such was the peculiar line of argumentation adopted by Hierocles[3].

An hostile feeling towards Christianity has also been supposed to pervade the biography of that same Apollonius, written by the rhetorician Philostratus, one of the favourites of Julia Domna, the wife of Septimius Severus. We are, however, unable to discover definite traces of such a feeling in any passages of the work, although occasions were not wanting on which to introduce it, as for example, where he speaks of the Jews. He speaks, however, far more of the anger of God in the calamities which befel Jerusalem (B. IV. c. 29.) which the Christians reckoned favourable to their cause. It may indeed be said, that Philostratus, while he painted in exaggerated colours the character of a hero of the old religion, as others did that of Pythagoras, was endeavouring to give a new turn to a sinking religion; and such an attempt might certainly have been produced by the general extension of Christianity; and it may have been his intention to oppose Apollonius, as an Hero of the old religion, to Christ; and he may have been led to many individual features in his story by what he had heard of the miracles of Christ, although no *prominent* allusions of such a sort occur, as would *really prove this point.*

While Christianity was thus assailed by persecution and by argument, the argument found, from the time of Hadrian, advocates of Christianity and of the Christians ready to cope with it. We shall speak more expressly of their apologies in our chapter on the teachers of the Church. We only here mention that these apologies were of two different kinds, and had two different objects; one kind consisted of expositions of Christian truth, destined for all educated heathens, the others were more like

[3] About this person consult Lactantius de Mortib. Persecutor. v. ii. 16; and Euseb. adv. Hieroclem.

official documents, the composers of which came forward before the emperor, or before his representatives in the provinces, (the proconsuls, &c.) as the advocates of Christianity. As they could obtain no hearing personally, they were obliged to speak through their writings. The notion that the addresses to the emperor, the senate, or the governor, are merely ornamental dresses for these writings, according to the common practice of rhetoricians in these days to compose set-speeches (declamationes) does not suit the circumstances nor the dispositions of Christians in those days; it is more natural to suppose that the Christians, in setting forth these writings, intended to correct the judgment of the governors of districts on the subject of Christianity and Christians. It is not, however, to be wondered at, if these writings, in regard to heathen governors, fell short of their aim; for they hardly gave themselves the time, and were hardly in the proper frame of mind, to judge with calmness what was said in these Apologies. Even master-pieces of an apologetic nature, which these Apologies, written out of the warmth of belief and fulness of persuasion, were not, could here have produced no effect, for they could never recommend Christianity to the eyes of Roman statesmen, who looked on *religion only in a political* point of view; they could never make of Christianity a "religio Romana." They might appeal, with all the power of truth, to general rights of man, unknown to men accustomed to look on religion as a matter of politics; they might make good the principle which, near as it *seems to lie* to the human heart and feelings, was first brought into full light by Christianity, that religion is a matter of free persuasion and feeling, that belief cannot be forced, and that God cannot be honoured by a service extorted by force. "It is," says Tertullian, (ad Scapul. ch. ii.) "a matter of human right, and is a power which naturally belongs to every man, to worship the God on whom he believes: it is no business of religion to force religion, for it must be received voluntarily, and not compulsorily insisted on." All this they might urge; but the Roman statesman concerned himself only with *outward obedience to the laws*, and nothing could teach him to separate the man from the citizen. The apologist might appeal to the blameless life of the Christians, and, demanding the strictest investigation of their conduct, challenge punishment on all that was criminal: this too would be of no avail. The better-informed no longer believed

these popular and fabulous stories; like Pliny, they found altogether in the Christians no crime against morality. But notwithstanding this, the Christian life appeared to them irreconcileable with the "mores Romani" and the "disciplina Romana," and they still regarded Christianity as a feverish enthusiasm, which might be dangerous to the safety and order of the Roman state.

SECTION II.

THE HISTORY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH, CHURCH DISCIPLINE AND CHURCH DIVISIONS.

I. *The History of the constitution of the Church.*

(1.) *The History of the organization of congregations* [*or Churches*] *in general.*

I. In the history of the formation of the Christian Church we must carefully distinguish from each other two considerations of great importance:

The first, the epoch of its foundation in the apostolic age, as it arose out of the peculiar nature of Christianity without any extraneous influence—

The next, the changes which took place in it, as it proceeded onwards, after the first simple organization of a Church, under various extraneous influences, to the end of this period.

We are about to speak first of the foundation of the organization of a Church in the apostolic age.

[A.]—*The first foundation of the organization of the Christian Church in the Apostolic age*[1].

The formation of the Christian Church, as it developed itself out of the peculiarities of Christianity, must essentially differ from that

[1] [From the view taken in this chapter and the first part of that which follows, of the early government of the Christian Church, I feel myself called upon to express my most decided dissent, which I trust I may do without presumption, and without giving offence. The point at issue between Dr. Neander and those writers whose sentiments I believe to be founded in Scripture truth, is simply this: Whether the Apostles actually did institute a ministry, and make provision for the continuance of that ministry? It is indifferent to my argument whether these men are called ministers, priests, or presbyters; the only points I deem it necessary to inquire into are the following:

1. Did the Apostles ordain ministers by the imposition of hands? and,
2. Did they give them authority to ordain others?
3. Was it the office of these ministers to teach the people, in short to be their spiritual guides?

For the two first points I shall only refer to 1 Tim. iv. 14; Tit. i. 5; and the marginal references on those passages, either in the English Testament, or Wet-

of all other religious unions. A class of priests, who were to guide all other men under an assumption of their incompetence in religious matters, whose business it was *exclusively* to provide for the satisfaction of the religious wants of the rest of mankind, and to form a link between them and God, and godly things; such a class of priests could find no place in Christianity[2]. While the

stein's Greek Testament, of 1711. (The ed. of Gerard, of Maestricht, printed by Wetstein.)

For the third point I refer to the descriptions given of the office of an episcopos and a deacon, in 1 Tim. iii. iv.; and Tit. i. ii.

Now the next inquiry is, whether this was a mere temporary arrangement for the lifetime of the Apostles, or an institution to continue as long as Christian instruction was needed?

Our reason gives but one answer to this question, and if we look at Christian antiquity, every thing we see tends to confirm that view. We believe we may challenge our opponents to point out any season, however near the apostolic age, in which there was not a body of ministers duly ordained. I purposely avoid mentioning the episcopal question, not from any doubts upon it, but because the question here liés between ministers and no ministers. Now the accounts we have of clergy and of bishops come up tolerably near to the apostolic age. Clemens, Polycarp, and Ignatius, may be supposed able to judge what the intentions of the Apostles were in this respect, and to their works we appeal. They were the contemporaries and the disciples of the Apostles themselves. As I have already touched on this subject in my preface, I shall only refer again to the valuable tract of Leslie, intituled, 'An Essay on the Qualifications requisite to Administer the Sacraments,' where there is a full collection of passages from the fathers relating to this point. This hasty sketch of the outline of the argument which the advocates of a ministry hold, is all to which I can give insertion on the general question, without overstepping the limits to which I must confine myself. During the rest of the chapter, I shall merely point out what appear to me weak points in the view which Dr. Neander advocates, and that as briefly as possible.—H. J. R.]

[2] [On this point I must again differ from the learned and amiable author of this work. In estimating the spirit of the Gospel, we are bound to take in the practice of the Apostles as well as their writings. Their practice could not contradict the tenor of their writings. It was attempted in the last note to hint what that practice was, and also some of the language which they themselves held upon the point. I think Dr. Neander seems to argue as if those who hold our sentiments thought that the clergy alone are to pray to God, and that their prayers are efficacious for the rest of the people, as an "opus operatum." I apprehend that a good Roman Catholic would not entirely approve of this notion, and all good Protestants declare their abhorrence of it by ordering the prayers to be offered "in a tongue understanded of the people." What we claim exclusively as ministers, is a right to administer the sacraments, and to teach the Church of Christ. Now it is acknowledged by Dr. Neander himself, (p. 199, in the German, and nearly the same in my translation,) that the ignorance and the necessary occupations of many of the Christian brethren, soon rendered regular ministers necessary. We contend that the Almighty foreseeing this necessity, (or for other reasons which we presume not to scrutinize,) provided for it by establishing a body of teachers.

One word more as to the arguments drawn from the expressions in 1 Pet. ii. 5:

Gospel put away that which separated man from God, by bringing all men into the same communion with God through Christ; it also removed that partition-wall which separated one man from his fellows, in regard to his more elevated interests. The same High Priest, and Mediator for all, through whom all being reconciled and united with God, become themselves a priestly and spiritual race! One heavenly King, Guide, and Teacher, through whom all are taught from God! one faith! one hope! one Spirit, which must animate all! one oracle in the hearts of all!—the voice of the Spirit which proceeds from God! and all citizens of one heavenly kingdom, with whose heavenly powers they have already been sent forth, as strangers in the world! When the Apostles introduced the notion of a priest which is found in the Old Testament into Christianity, it was always only with the intention of showing, that no such visible distinct priesthood, as existed in the economy of the Old Testament, could find admittance into that of the New; that, inasmuch as free access to God and to heaven was once for all opened to the faithful through the one High priest, Christ, they had become, by union with Him himself, a holy and spiritual people, and their calling was only this, namely, to consecrate their whole life, as a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the mercy of God's redemption, and to preach the power and grace of Him, who had called them from the kingdom of darkness into his wonderful light, and their whole life was to be a continued priesthood, a spiritual serving of God, proceeding from the affections of a faith working by love, and also a continued witness of their Redeemer. Comp. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rom. xii. 1. and the spirit and connexion of ideas, throughout the whole Epistle to the Hebrews. And thus also the furtherance of God's kingdom, both in general and in each individual community, the furtherance of the propagation of Christianity among the heathen, and the improvement of each particular Church, was not to be the concern of a particular chosen class of Christians, but the nearest duty of every individual Christian. Every one was to contribute to this object from the station

where all Christians are called a royal priesthood. This argument proves nothing against a body of priests, because exactly the same expression is applied to the Jews, when obedient, and it will not, I suppose, be disputed that there was a peculiar priesthood among them. See Exod. xix. 5, 6; and see Bennett's Rights of the Clergy, p. 57; Laurence's Lay Baptism Invalid, vol. i. p. 195.—H. J. R.]

assigned to him by the invisible head of the Church, and by the gifts peculiar to him, which were given him by God, and grounded in his nature—a nature, which retained, indeed, *its individual character*, but was regenerated and ennobled by the influence of the Holy Spirit. There was here no division into spiritual and worldly, but all, as Christians, in their inward life and dispositions, were to be men dead to the ungodliness of the world, and thus far departed out of the world; men animated by the Spirit of God, and not by the spirit of the world. The peculiar and prevailing capabilities of Christians, as far as they were sanctified and consecrated by this Spirit, and employed by it as the organs of its active influence, became Charismata, or gifts of grace. Hence the apostle St. Paul began his address to the Corinthian Church, on the subject of gifts, in this manner, (1 Cor. xii.) "Once, when ye were heathen, ye suffered yourselves to be led blindly by your priests to dumb idols; ye were dead and dumb as they. Now, while ye serve the living God through Christ, *ye have no longer any such leaders*, to draw you blindly by leading-strings[3]. Ye have yourselves now the Spirit of God for your guide, who enlightens you. Ye no more follow in silence, he speaks out of you; there are many gifts, but there is one Spirit." Who shall arrogate that to himself, which the enlightened apostle ventured not to do, to be lord over the faith of Christians?

The condition of the Corinthian Church, as it is depicted in the Epistles of St. Paul, deficient as it was in many respects, shows us how a Christian Church should act; how all in that Church should mutually co-operate, with their mutual gifts, as members of the same body, *with equal honour*[4], supplying one another's deficiencies. The office of a teacher was not here

[3] [I must request my readers to compare this passage with the original Greek. I have translated from the German of Dr. Neander, as literally as I was able, but he has paraphrased the passage, and, I cannot but think, paraphrased it so as to give it a meaning not to be found in the original. The words, "by your priests," and the passage which I have put into italics, are pure insertions. With regard to the first, the heathen priests are probably alluded to; but the clause in italics on which so much of the argument depends, is entirely a gratuitous insertion, as far as I can discover. I leave the question, therefore, to the reader, requesting him again to compare the original passage.—H. J. R.]

[4] [It appears to me that the words, "with equal honour," which I have put in italics, are expressly contrary to the sentiments of St. Paul. He says, strongly enough, "Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers?" &c. 1 Cor. xii. 29. H. J. R.]

exclusively assigned to one or to more, but every one who felt a call to that office, might address a discourse to the assembly of the Church for the instruction of all. According to the differences in the particular natures of the individual Christians, who served as instruments to the working of the Holy Spirit, and by which the difference in the form of its manifestation among them was determined, the efficacy of this Spirit came forth, sometimes under a creative form (as in the gift of prophecy), sometimes (as in the gift of trying of spirits, or interpretation) as a receptive or a critical power. We hence find very great varieties and differences in the degrees of inspiration, and in the relation of the *Human* to the *Divine* among them: sometimes the *deep*, *reflecting*, *purely-human* energy of the spirit, prevailing; and at others, while this is kept in the back-ground; the Spirit of God, in its omnipotence, outweighing it: and here too we find the manifold degrees of the gift of tongues, down to the ordinary, regular gift of teaching (the χαρισμα διδασκαλιας).

As Christianity did not annihilate the peculiar arrangements of our nature, founded in the laws of our original creation, but sanctified and ennobled them[5], it did not (although, in reference to the higher life, the partition-wall between man and wife was taken away through Christ, and in Him man and wife became one), it did not, I say, allow the female sex to step out of the peculiar habits and destination indicated for it by nature herself. Women alone are interdicted by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiv. 34. from speaking in the Church—a proof also[6], that no other exception from this general right of all Christians existed. This last exception was constantly thus retained in the times that followed; this even the fanciful Montanists recognised—they only determined that the *extraordinary* operations of the Spirit did not follow this rule, and they appealed to the case of the women that prophesied, 1 Cor. xi. although without good reason, for the apostle is here only speaking of that which actually was the case in the Corinthian Church, without approving it, with the intention, at the same time, of settling it afterwards, as appears from a

[5] It is true also, in this respect, that Christianity came not to destroy, but to fulfil.

[6] [It is difficult to imagine how any one could consider this a *proof* of the assertion in the text. It only proves that *no* woman was allowed to teach, while many men were; but it does not show, in the smallest degree, that *all* men might teach. —H. J. R.]

comparison of the passage that follows, which we have cited above [7].

Now; although all Christians, had the same priestly calling, and the same priestly rights [8], and although there could not be any distinct class of priests in the first Christian Church; yet every Church [gemeinde, congregation, community or Church,] as a society for establishing and extending the kingdom of God, an union for the avowal of the same faith in word and work, for the mutual confirmation and animation of this faith, for communion, and for the mutual furtherance of that higher life which flowed from this faith,—an union for these most lofty aims, must obtain a form and consistence proportioned to them; for, without this form, nothing can continue to exist among men. Christian Churches stood still more in need of such an established order, since they must develope themselves, and make their progress in a world so foreign to them, and under the influence of such various sources of threats and disturbance, or at least of affliction. In them, as in every society, a certain government and conduct of the common interests must exist. That form of government must have corresponded best to the spirit of Christianity and the purposes for which Churches were formed, which was calculated the most to further their free development from within outwards, and also the most to further the collected and mutual efficacy of all individual powers and gifts. The monarchical form of government would have too much tendency to repress and overwhelm the free development of different peculiarities, and to introduce a system by which *one* definite human form should be stamped on every thing, instead of allowing the Spirit free choice to develope itself under a variety of human forms, and these mutually to lay hold of each other. It would too, probably, lead to a result, by which that which is human would be prized too highly, and one man have too much weight, so that he should become the centre around which every thing would gather itself, instead of the one invisible shepherd of all becoming the centre of all. How anxiously do the Apostles strive to keep

[7] Hilary, who wrote a Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul, is particularly distinguished by his impartial manner of considering Christian antiquity. Even in this respect he was well able to distinguish the original Christianity from the later, when he says, "Primum omnes docebant et omnes baptizabant, ut cresceret plebs et multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia concessum est, et evangelizare et baptizare et Scripturas explorare." Hilar. in Epist. Ephes. c. iv. v. 12.

[8] [See above, Note 1, p. 181.—H. J. R.]

off such a danger! How much does the Apostle St. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, insist on the free co-operation of all, that no one power or disposition might overwhelm the rest and reign triumphant! The Apostles themselves, conscious as they were of that higher degree of illumination, which was necessary for them alone in their capacity of founders of the first Church and teachers of pure Christianity for all times, conscious as they were of a higher degree of authority and power, delivered to them by the Divine Founder of the Church himself, such as was given to no other men, yet came forward as little as possible in a commanding manner [9], and endeavoured, as much as in them lay, to act with the free co-operation of the Churches in all the circumstances which concerned the Church, as we shall have occasion hereafter to notice more particularly. St. Peter and St. John, in their Epistles, placed themselves in the same rank [1] with the leaders of the Churches, instead of claiming to be the general governors of the Churches over them. How difficult must it have been in the Churches to find one individual who united in himself all the qualities requisite for the conduct of the affairs of the Churches, and who alone possessed the confidence of all men! Far easier must it have been to find a number of fathers of families in each Church, whose peculiarities were calculated to supply each other's defects in the administrations of the various offices, and of whom one possessed the confidence of one part of the community, and another that of others. The *monarchical principle in spiritual things* accords ill with the spirit of Christianity, which constantly points to the feelings of mutual need, and the necessity and blessing of common deliberation, as well as of common prayer. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord, there, also, He promises, will He be among them.

In addition to this, it was the custom of Christianity to appropriate to its own use existing forms, when it found any which suited its spirit and its essence. Now there was actually a form of government existing in the Jewish synagogues, and in all the

[9] [But they by no means declined to use authority when needful, and to enjoin others, as Timothy and Titus, to do the same. See Tit. i. 10—14. 1 Tim. i. 3—8; iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 7, &c.—H. J. R.]

[1] [St. Peter indeed, 1 Pet. v. 1, calls himself an *elder*, but he elsewhere styles himself an Apostle, and we can hardly fail to observe that *this* title implied something more, "Are all Apostles?" 1 Cor. xii. 29.—H. J. R.]

sects which had their origin in Judaism; and this was in no respects a monarchical, but an aristocratical form; a council of the elderly men זְקֵנִים, πρεσβυτεροι, which conducted all common affairs. It was most natural for Christianity, developing itself from out of Judaism, to embrace this form. This form must also, wherever Churches were established in the Roman empire among the heathen, have appeared the most natural; for men were here accustomed from of old to see the affairs of towns carried on by a senate, the assembly of *decuriones*. That the comparison of the ecclesiastical administration with the political really took place here, is shown by this, that the spiritual persons were afterwards named an *ordo*, the leading senate of the Church, for *ordo* was a word peculiarly appropriated to this rank of senators, *ordo senatorum* [2].

In compliance with this form a council of elders was generally appointed to conduct the affairs of the Churches; but it was not necessary that it should be strictly composed of those who were the most aged, although age was taken very much into the account, but age was rather considered here as a sign of dignity, as in the Latin *senatus*, or in the Greek γερουσια. Besides the usual appellation of these governors of the Churches, namely, πρεσβυτεροι, there were many others also in use, designating their peculiar sphere of action, as ποιμενες shepherds פַּרְנָסִין, ἡγουμενοι, προεστωτες των ἀδελφων, and one of these appellations was also ἐπισκοπος, denoting their office as leaders and overseers over the whole of the Church.

That the name also of episcopus was altogether synonymous with that of presbyter is clearly collected from the passages of Scripture, where both appellations are interchanged (Acts xx. compare ver. 17 with ver. 28; Epistle to Titus, ch. i. verses 5 and 7), as well as from those, where the mention of the office of deacon follows immediately after that of "episcopi," so that a third class of officers could not lie between the two [3]. Philipp.

[2] [This surely requires more than mere assertion and conjecture to support it. What ought first to be made out is this: that the presbyters were the rulers rather than the teachers of the Church, and that they ruled the Church by a college or council: and next, that the name *ordo* arose from that circumstance. Why might not *ordo* be applied to any body of men?—H. J. R.]

[3] [This admits of a very different explanation. Suppose it granted that "episcopus" was sometimes used for a pastor in a single parish at first, as well as for the ordaining officer, yet this name might very shortly after be appropriated to the

i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 1—8. *This interchange* of the two appellations is a proof of their *entire coincidence;* if the name *bishop* had originally been the appellation of the president of this church senate, of a *primus inter pares*, such an interchange could never have taken place. In the letter also, which Clement, the disciple of St. Paul, wrote in the name of the Roman Church, after the bishops, as presidents of the Churches, the deacons are immediately named. See chap. xlii.

These presbyters or bishops, had the superintendence over the whole Church, the conduct of all its common affairs, but the office of teacher was not exclusively assigned to them; for, as we have above observed, *all Christians* had the right to pour out their hearts before their brethren in the assemblies of the Church, and to speak for their edification. At the same time, it does not *hence* follow, that *all* the members of the Church were fitted for the ordinary office of teaching; there is a great distinction between a regular capability of teaching, always under the control of him who possessed it, and an outpouring (like prophecy or the gift of tongues) proceeding from a sudden inspiration, and accompanied with a peculiar and elevated but transient state of mind, and the latter might very probably descend from above on all vital Christians in those first times of extraordinary excitement from above, when the divine life first entered into the limits of this earthly world. On such transient excitements of a peculiar state of mind in individuals[4], care for the maintenance, propagation, and advancement of clear religious knowledge could not be made safely to depend, any more than the defence of the pure and genuine apostolic doctrine against the manifold false tendencies of Jewish or heathen views which had already thus early begun to threaten the Church. Although *all* Christians must be taught only by the *one heavenly Guide*, yet regard to the weakness of human

higher order, who had the power of ordaining. Immediately after the apostolic age, episcopus was used for one, among a number of other clergy, and it must surely then have designated one of higher power than the rest.—H. J. R.]

[4] [The considerations adduced here lead us to one or two reflections of some importance. If these gifts constituted the warrant of unordained brethren to address the Church, when these gifts of an extraordinary nature had ceased, none but the ordained ministers would have a right to teach the Church. Again, we are led to think, that if a regular ministry was necessary even while these gifts were bestowed on the Church, it must have been doubly necessary after they were withdrawn. I must refer my readers to the preface to this translation for a few more remarks on these χαρισματα. H. J. R.]

nature, which is destined to keep the treasures of heaven in earthen vessels, made it requisite that persons should never be wanting in the Church, who were peculiarly qualified constantly to set strongly before their brethren their relation to the common guide and Redeemer of all, to impress it on their hearts forcibly, to show them how every thing ought to be viewed in connexion with this one relation, and to warn them against every thing which threatened to withdraw them from this fundamental principle of Christian life. Such a capability of expounding, which was always under the control of him who possessed it, pre supposed a certain cultivation of the intellect, a certain clearness and acuteness of thought, and a certain power of communicating its impressions to others, which, when they were present and penetrated and animated by the power of the Spirit of God, became the χαρισμα διδασκαλιας. Those who possessed this Charisma were on that account appointed to provide for the constant maintenance of pure doctrines in the Church, and for the confirmation and advancement of Christian knowledge, without excluding the co-operation of others, each in his own station, according to the gift bestowed upon him. In the apostolic age, therefore, the χαρισμα διδασκαλιας and the rank of teachers of the Church, διδασκαλοι, who were distinguished by that gift, are mentioned as something quite peculiar, 1 Cor. xii. 28; xiv. 6; Ephes. iv. 11. All the members of the Church might feel themselves impelled, at particular moments, to address the congregation of brethren, or to cry out to God and praise Him before them, but only a few had that χαρισμα διδασκαλιας, and were διδασκαλοι.

But it is also clear, from the case itself, that this talent of instruction is quite a different thing from the talent for administering the affairs of the Church, the χαρισμα κυβερνησεως, which was particularly required for the office of an assessor of the council, a presbyter or bishop[5]. A man might possess to a great extent dexterity in outward matters, and Christian prudence, and in general those more practical capacities which are required for *such* an office in the Church, without uniting to them the turn

[5] [Here again there is a point of great importance disposed of most unsatisfactorily. Can it be granted at all that the office of presbyter was merely of this kind? Does it not appear from all that the apostles say of episcopi and presbyters, that they were especially to see to the maintenance of sound doctrine in the Church, that is, be its teachers? See Tit. i.; 1 Tim. i. iii. &c. H. J. R.]

of mind and the cultivation of the understanding requisite for that of a teacher. In the first apostolic Church, to whose spirit all arbitrary and idle distinction of ranks was so foreign, in which offices being considered only in regard to the object which they were destined to obtain, were limited by an inward necessity, the offices of governing and those of teaching the Churches[6], the office of a διδασκαλος, and that of a ποιμην were accordingly separated from each other[7].

The perception of this distinction so clearly laid down, might lead us to the supposition that originally those teachers of the Church, expressly so called, did not belong to the class of rulers[8] of the Churches, and certainly it is not capable of proof that they always belonged to the presbyters. Thus much only is certain, it was a source of great satisfaction when, among the rulers of the Church, there were men qualified also for teachers. Although to the presbyters in general (as in St. Paul's parting speech to the presbyters of the Church of Ephesus, Acts xx.) the guardianship over the maintenance of pure doctrine was assigned, it does not thence follow that they had to execute the office of teacher in the stricter sense of the word, for the question here may merely have concerned the general care of the government of the Church. But when, in the epistle to Titus, it is required of a bishop not only that he should for his own part hold fast the genuine pure doctrine of the Gospel, but that he should also be capable of confirming others in it, and of gainsaying the adversaries of it, it clearly follows that the bishop was required to possess also that gift of teaching. This might, under many circumstances of the Churches, as under those which are spoken of in this epistle, perhaps be particularly desirable on account of the danger which threatened the Church from the propagation of heresies, which the paternal authority of the elders of the Church, supported by their pre-eminence as teachers, was to oppose. Thus also in the first epistle to Timothy, v. 17. those presbyters who were able to unite with the power of ruling (the κυβερνησις) also that of teaching (the διδασκαλια) were espe-

[6] The χαρισμα διδασκαλιας and the χαρισμα κυβερνησεως.

[7] Compare Rom. xii. 7, 8. (for the distinction between the διδασκων and the προεστως) and the above-cited passages.

[8] [Gemeindevorsteher. This is the same word used two pages back, and applied to the presbyters, which Neander makes synonymous with bishops (in the explanation of the word פרנסין). H. J. R.]

cially honoured, which gives us at the same time a proof that both were not *necessarily and always* united[9].

Besides this we find only one Church office in the apostolic age, the office of deacon. The business of this office was at first only external, as according to Acts vi. it was instituted to assist in the administration of alms: care for the poor and the sick belonging to the Church, to which afterwards many other external cares were added, was peculiarly the business of this office. Besides the deacons there were also established for the female part of the community deaconesses, where the free access of men to females, especially as the sexes are so carefully separated in the east, might excite suspicion and give offence. Although women, in conformity to their natural destination, were excluded from the offices of teaching and governing the Churches, yet in this manner the peculiar qualities of females were brought into demand, as peculiar gifts for the service of the Church. By means of these deaconesses the Gospel might be brought into the inmost recesses of family life, where, from eastern manners, no man could have obtained admittance[1]. As Christian mothers and mistresses of families, experienced and tried in all the trials that belonged to women, they were to uphold the younger women of the Church by their counsels and consolations[2].

So far as regards the election to these offices, we are without sufficient information to decide certainly, how it was managed in the first apostolic times, and it is very possible, that from a difference in circumstances, the same method of proceeding was

[9] [It may be well to mention that this passage has given rise to much controversy, and is very differently interpreted. For the satisfaction of the reader I here transcribe a very different interpretation of it from the celebrated work of bishop Bilson, on the "Perpetual Government of Christ's Church," now become a scarce book.

"*Presbyters, if they rule well, are worthy of double honour, especially if they labour in the word:* or *presbyters for ruling well are worthy of double honour; especially for labouring in the word.* Here are not two sorts of elders (as they conceive) the one to govern, the other to teach; but two duties of each *presbyter;* namely, to teach and govern, before he can be most worthy of double honour." Bilson, Epistle Ded. p. 8, 9. Compare p. 131. H. J. R.]

[1] A proof of this occurs in Clement of Alexandria, Str. l. iii. p. 448, on Christian women: δι' ὧν και εἰς την γυναικωνιτιν ἀδιαβλητως παρεισεδυετο ἡ του Κυριου διδασκαλια.

[2] Tertullian de Virginn. velandis, c. 9. ut experimentis omnium affectuum structæ, facile norint cæteras et consilio et solatio juvare, et ut nihilominus ea decucurrerint, per quæ fœmina probari potest.

not adopted in all cases. As the apostles, in the appointment of the deacons, allowed the Church itself to choose; and as this also was the case, when deputies were sent by the Churches in their name to accompany the apostles (2 Cor. viii. 19), we may conclude that a similar proceeding was resorted to in the appointment to other Church offices. It may nevertheless have happened, that where the apostles could not place implicit confidence in the spirit of the first new Churches, they gave the important office of presbyter to those who appeared to them, under the light of the Holy Spirit, the most fitted for it; their choice would also deserve the highest confidence on the part of the Church, compare Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5: although when St. Paul gives Titus power to appoint rulers of the Church, who had the requisite qualities, nothing is *thereby* determined as to the nature of the election; it does not necessarily follow that an election by the Church itself is absolutely excluded. It appears to have been part of the system of discipline, that the Church offices should be confided to the first converted men, if they had the proper qualifications. 1 Cor. vi. 16[3]. Clement of Rome brings forward the rule, as if laid down by the apostle, for the appointment to Church offices, "*that they should be possessed after the judgment of approved men, with the consent of the whole Church.*" The usual custom might be, that on a vacancy in any of these offices the presbyters themselves presented to the Church another to supply the place of the deceased, and that it was left to the Church to ratify their choice, or to reject on definite grounds[4]. Where the request to the Church for her consent was not a mere formality, this method of appointing to Church offices had this beneficial influence, that by its means the voice of the larger multitude would be guided by those who were capable of judging, all schisms would be suppressed, and yet no person would be obtruded on the Church, who was not affectionately looked upon by them.

[3] So also Clement of Rome, ch. xlii. says of the apostles, that κατα χωρας και πολεις κηρυσσοντες καθιστανον τας ἀπαρχας αὐτων, δοκιμασαντες τῳ πνευματι εἰς ἐπισκοπους και διακονους των μελλοντων πιστευειν.

[This appears to be quite natural, nay, almost necessary. Of whom could the apostles make bishops and elders but of some of those first converted? Of those not yet converted? It must be from one of these two classes, unless they had a supply ready to be sent to any point they visited themselves. H. J. R.]

[4] Clemens, 44. Τους καταστaθεντας ὑπο των ἀποστολων ἠ μεταξυ ὑφ' ἑτερων ἐλλογιμων ἀνδρων, συνευδοκησασης της ἐκκλησιας πασης.

As to what further regards the relation of these presbyters to the Churches, they were destined to be not unlimited monarchs[5], but rulers and guides in an ecclesiastical republic, and to conduct every thing in conjunction with the Church assembled together, as the servants and not the masters of which they were to act. The apostles saw these relations in this manner, because they addressed their epistles, which treated, not merely of doctrinal circumstances, but of things pertaining to the ecclesiastical life and discipline, not to the rulers of the Churches only, but to the whole of the Church. Where the apostle St. Paul pronounces an exclusion from the communion of the Church, he represents himself as united in spirit with the whole Church, (1 Cor. v. 4.) supposing that for an affair of such general concernment the assembling of the Church would be regularly requisite.

[B.] *The changes in the Discipline of the Christian Church after the apostolic age.*

The change which had the most extensive influence on the form of the Christian Church, in this period, related particularly to three points.

(*a.*) The separation between bishops and presbyters, and the development of the monarchico-episcopal government.

(*b.*) The separation between spiritual persons and the laity, and the formation of a caste of priests, in contradiction to the evangelic notion of the Christian priesthood. And,

(*c.*) The multiplication of Church-offices.

With regard to the first we are without precise and perfect information as to the manner in which this change took place in individual cases, but nevertheless it is a thing which analogy will make quite clear on a general view. It was natural that, as the presbyters formed a deliberative assembly, it should soon happen that one among them obtained the pre-eminence[6]. This

[5] [This is surely rather strangely put. In one half of the sentence the presbyters are rulers and guides, in the other they are only the servants of the Church. H. J. R.]

[6] [It will not fail to be observed here, that our author has recourse to conjecture as to what may have been the case, and that in the next sentence he honestly admits that there is *no historical* trace whatever of any such arrangement. As far as

might be so managed that a certain succession took place, according to which the presidency should change, and pass from one to the other. It is possible that in many places such an arrangement took place, and yet we find no historical trace of any thing of the kind; but then, as we have above remarked, there is, on the other hand, no trace to be found by which we should conclude that the office of the president of the college of presbyters was distinguished by any peculiar name. However it may appear with regard to this point, what we find in the second century leads us to conclude that, immediately after the apostolic age, the standing office of president of the presbyters must have been formed, to whom, inasmuch as he had especially the oversight of every thing, was the name of Επισκοπος given, and he was thereby distinguished from the rest of the presbyters. This name was then, at last, exclusively applied to this president, while the name of presbyter remained common to all: for the bishops, as the presiding presbyters, had as yet no other official character than that of presbyters, they were only "primi inter pares[7]."

This relation of the bishops to the presbyters we see continuing even to the end of the second century: Irenæus, therefore, uses[8] the name of "bishop" and "presbyter" sometimes as wholly

I have examined the subject, I find this admission fully confirmed. Its importance need scarcely be pointed out. H. J. R.]

[7] Many later writers properly recognise this course of things. Hilar. in Ep. i. ad Timoth. c. 3. Omnis episcopus presbyter, non tamen omnis presbyter episcopus; hic enim episcopus est, qui inter presbyteros primus est. Jerome says (146. ad Evangel.) it was the custom in the Alexandrian Church, till the time of the bishops Heraclitus and Dionysius, up to the middle of the third century, that the presbyters chose one of their number for their president, and called him bishop. And so also there may be some truth at bottom in the story told by Eutychius, who was patriarch of Alexandria in the first half of the tenth century, although it cannot be altogether true, and is certainly false in chronology; viz. that in the Alexandrian Church, to the time of the bishop Alexander, in the beginning of the fourth century, the following arrangement had existed: there was a college of twelve presbyters, among whom one, as bishop, had the pre-eminence, and these presbyters had always chosen one out of their own body as bishop, and the other eleven had given him ordination.

[8] Both names are used synonymously, iv. 26. where he attributes the "successio episcopatus presbyteris." He distinguishes the names in iii. 14. When it is related in the Acts xx. 17. that Paul had called to him the presbyters of the Churches of Asia Minor, Irenæus reckons among them the bishops also, under the view that these were then only the presiding presbyters. "In Mileto convocatis episcopis et presbyteris." The confusion which exists in regard to the succession of the first bishops of Rome, may perhaps also be attributed to this cause, that originally these

synonymous, and at other times he distinguishes the bishop as the president from the presbyters. Even Tertullian calls the leaders of the Christian Churches by the one general name of Seniores, while he comprehends in that name both bishops and presbyters, although that father was very particular about the difference between bishops and presbyters[9]. Indeed, in many respects Tertullian stands generally at the line of demarcation between the old and the new time of the Christian Church.

The situation of the Churches during the persecutions, and the numerous oppressions in which the energetic conduct of one man at the head of affairs might prove of great use, furthered the formation of the monarchical government in the Church. And yet even in the third century the presbyters were at the side of the bishops as a college of councillors, and the bishops undertook nothing weighty without gathering together this council[1]. When Cyprian, bishop of the Church at Carthage, separated from it by his flight during the persecution, had any thing of consequence to transact, he instantly imparted it to the presbyters, who remained behind him, and he apologised to them for having been obliged at times to decide without being able to call them together. To do nothing without their advice, he declares to be his constant principle[2]. Reminding them of the original relation of the bishops to the presbyters, he calls them his "compresbyteros." And it was doubtless natural enough, that before this episcopal system of government could firmly establish itself, many struggles must have taken place, because the presbyters would be inclined to maintain the original power which belonged to them, and refuse to subject themselves to the authority of the bishops. Often, indeed, many presbyters made a capricious use of this power, which was very prejudicial to the discipline and order of the Church. Schisms arose, of which we shall have to speak hereafter, and the authority of the bishops, closely connected as they were one with another, triumphed over the opposition of presbyters, who acted without concert. The power and activity of a Cyprian contributed much to promote

names were not so distinguished, and therefore many might bear at the same time the names of bishops or presbyters.

[9] Apologet. c. 39. Præsident probati quique seniores.

[1] Presbyterium contrahere.

[2] Ep. v. A primordio episcopatus mei statui, nihil sine consilio vestro meæ privatim sententiæ gerere. Sicut honor mutuus poscit, in commune tractabimus.

this victory, but we should do him wrong, and pervert the proper view of the whole matter; if we accuse him of having acted from the beginning with a decided intention of raising up the episcopacy, as it rarely happens in such matters that one individual can succeed in fashioning the occurrences of a whole period after a scheme arranged to forward his own love of rule. Cyprian rather, without being conscious to himself of any scheme, acted here in the spirit of a whole party, and of a whole ecclesiastical disposition, that existed in his time. He acted as the representant of the episcopal system, the struggle of which against the presbyterian system was a fundamental feature of the whole progress of the Church. The contention of the presbyterian parties among one another, might have become utterly prejudicial to discipline and order in the Church; the victory of the episcopal system especially promoted unity, order, and quiet in the Churches; but then, on the other hand, it was prejudicial to the free development of habits of the Churchly life, and the formation of a priesthood, altogether foreign to the Gospel economy, was not a little furthered by it. Thus this change of the original form of the Christian Church stands in close connection with another change, which takes still deeper root, *the formation of a caste of priests in the Christian Church.* The more a Christian Church answered its proper destination, and corresponded to its true model, the more must it be shown in the mutual relations of all its members, that all, taught, led, and filled by the One, all drawing from the same fountain, and mutually imparting, as equal members of the one body, stand in reciprocal relation to each other under the one general Head; and the less, therefore, can any difference exist among them between some to give and others to receive, teachers and learners, guides and those who let themselves be guided,—as we find it was in the early Churches. Now the very nature of things is such, that as the first Christian spirit died away, and as *the Human* became more prominent in the progress of the Church, as in the increasing Churches the difference of education and Christian knowledge manifested itself more clearly, this difference would also more clearly develop itself. The leading preponderance of individuals would of itself take continually deeper root, and it would happen of itself, that the presbyters would exercise a continually increasing influence over the administration of Church affairs; and that the διδασκαλοι continually more and

more exclusively took the task of addressing the Church. All this might follow of itself, from the natural progress of affairs in the Church, although it must have been the earnest endeavour of those influential individuals, if they had been animated by the true spirit of the Gospel, and not by an unevangelic spirit of party and caste, (which springs up so easily from the selfishness of human nature, the source of all Popery,) to restore continually that original relation of reciprocity between themselves and the Church, and continually to promote the general participation of all in the affairs of the Church. And yet, besides that which followed of itself from the natural course of affairs, there was still another idea mixed up imperceptibly with it, which was utterly foreign to the Christian economy, and the influence of which became very important; and it was an idea which in aftertimes was constantly introducing usages utterly repugnant to the essential views of the Gospel. We now proceed to notice this idea.

The notions of the theocracy of the Old and of the New Testament, which were so decidedly kept distinct from one another by the apostles and the first Christians, became again gradually interchanged and confused; the source of theoretical and practical errors, which lasted through many centuries, and which (if we except the scattered witnesses to the truth in each century) was first again opposed by the pure light of genuine Christianity by means of the Reformation. As, in virtue of this interchange, many notions of government, foreign to the Gospel, were brought from the Old Testament into the Church of Christ, so also was the Old Testament notion of the priesthood introduced. The false conclusion was drawn, that as there had been in the Old Testament a visible priesthood joined to a particular class of men, there must also be the same in the New, and the original evangelical notion of a general spiritual priesthood fell therefore into the back-ground. This error is to be found already in Tertullian's time, as he calls the bishop "summus sacerdos," (de Baptismo, c. xvii.) an appellation which was certainly not invented by him, but taken from a habit of speaking and thinking already prevalent in a certain part, at least, of the Church. This name also imports, that men already compared the presbyters with the priests, and the deacons, or spiritual persons generally, with the Levites. We can judge from this, how much the false comparison of the Christian priesthood with the Jewish furthered

again the rise of episcopacy above the office of presbyters. In general, the more they degenerated from the pure Christian view into the Jewish, the more the original free composition of the Christian Church became changed. We see Cyprian already wholly penetrated by this intermixture of the Old and New Testament notions.

In the names by which the Church officers were distinguished from the remaining part of the community, we find no trace of this interchange. The Latin expressions "ordo" and "plebs" only denoted the guiding senate of the Christian people; the Greek names κληρος, κληρικοι, had even in Cyprian's time been applied in this unevangelic sense. By this application they were made to designate "men consecrated to God's service," like the Levites of the Old Testament, men who busied themselves only with the affairs of religion, and not with earthly things, who did not gain their livelihood, like other men, by worldly business, but on this very account, that they busied themselves with God only for the advantage of others, were maintained by the others, just as the Levites in the partition of the land had received no inheritance in land; but had the Lord only for their inheritance, and were to receive tithes from the others for their management of the Temple worship, οἱ εἰσιν ὁ κληρος του Θεου or ὡν ὁ κληρος ὁ Θεος ἐστι. See Deuteronomy, ch. xviii. This notion of a peculiar people of God, so particularly applied to a particular class of men among Christians, as a κληρος του Θεου, is certainly in this sense wholly unevangelic, for all Christians ought in this sense to be a body of men consecrated to God, a κληρος του Θεου, and even all their earthly callings ought to be sanctified by the spirit in which they pursue them; their whole life was to become by the sanctification by which they were animated, a spiritual service to God, a λογικη λατρεια. Such was the original Gospel notion. But the enquiry is still to be made, whether that meaning, which contradicts this original Gospel notion, was really connected from the first with the name of κληρικοι for spiritual persons; and if we follow the history of the use of the word, we shall be rather inclined to conclude, that this meaning was introduced in later times into an expression, whose original meaning had been forgotten. The name κληρος originally denoted the situation bestowed on each one in the Church, either by God's appointment or by a choice determined under his influence; and

thus the Church offices were particularly called κληροι, to be chosen to them was called κληρουσθαι, and the men chosen to these offices, κληρικοι [3].

Although the idea of the priesthood in a pure evangelic sense, was, in other respects, constantly more and more darkened and driven into the back-ground by the prevalence of that unevangelic view of it, yet was it too deeply engrafted into the very essence of Christianity, to be wholly overwhelmed. At the time of Tertullian, who stands on the boundary between two different epochs in the development of the Church, we still find more definite traces of the powerful opposition, which the original Christian consciousness of the universal and spiritual priesthood, and of the Christian rights founded thereon, made to the hierarchy, which was establishing itself. In his work on Baptism, which he wrote before his conversion to Montanism, Tertullian, in regard to the use of the general rights of the priesthood by all Christians, declares the true principle by which *Divine right* and *human order* should be maintained. "As far as the thing itself is concerned, the laity have the right to administer the sacraments, and to teach in the Churches. The word of God and the sacraments were communicated by God's grace to all Christians, and may therefore be communicated by all Christians, as instruments of God's grace. But the enquiry is here not

[3] We may thus explain how the stricter sense of "Lot" was lost sight of in this word, although the αρχαι κληρωται were opposed to αρχαις χειροτονηταις. So at first in the Acts i. 17. κληρος της διακονιας: in Irenæus iii. 3. κληρουσθαι την επισκοπην: Clemens Alex. Quis Dives salv. c. 42. κληρος and κληρουν are used reciprocally. We find, no doubt, in Clemens Romanus, c. 40, the relations of the Old Testament applied to the Christian Church, but certainly this letter (as well as those of Ignatius, although Clemens is in a less degree) has been interpolated by some one who was prejudiced in favour of the hierarchy *. In other passages of the same letter, we rather meet with the free spirit of the original presbyterian constitution of the Church. How simply in c. 42 is the appointment of bishops or presbyters and deacons related without any hierarchical pride. We cannot for a moment think of any such confusion of the Old and New Testament ideas in a disciple of St. Paul.

* [It must be remembered, that any assertion of interpolation, unsupported by evidence, is of no value. I do not deny the fact, I only require proof of it, if it can be obtained. The latter sentence of the author's note only states what he thinks Clement ought to have written: our question lies solely with what he did write. We may also ask, What contemporary writings are there, by a comparison with which this charge can be supported? It may also be observed that MSS. can give us no assistance in such an enquiry, as there is, I believe, only one MS. of *Clemens Romanus* in existence. See Mr. Jacobson's very useful edition of the *Patres Apostolici*, p. i.—H. J. R.]

merely, what is lawful in general, but also, what is convenient under existing circumstances. We must here apply the declaration of St. Paul, 'all things which are lawful, are not convenient.' With a view, therefore, to the maintenance of that order which is necessary in the Church, the laity should make use of their priestly rights as to the administration of the sacraments only where time and circumstances require it[4]."

Sometimes the laity in their struggle against the spiritual body, made good their original rights to the priesthood, as we see from those words of Tertullian, as *a Montanist*, in which he requires from the laity, in a certain case, that if they claimed the same rights as spiritual persons, they should also bind themselves by the same duties; when he says to them, "[5] When we elevate ourselves, and are puffed up against the clergy, then are we all one, then are we all priests, for he makes us all kings and priests before God and his Father." (Revel. i. 6.) Although the office of teaching in the congregations was constantly more and more limited to the bishops or presbyters, we find, nevertheless, many traces of that original equality of spiritual rights among all Christians. When, about the middle of the third century, two bishops in Palestine had no scruple in allowing the learned Origen to expound the Scriptures before their congregations, although he had received no ordination, and Dionysius of Alexandria, a bishop of hierarchical principles, reproved them for it; they defended themselves by alleging, that many of the Eastern bishops required the laity, who were capable of it, to preach[6]. Even in the spurious Apostolical Constitutions, (other-

[4] De Baptismo, i. c. 81.

[5] De Monogamia, 12.

[The German is here "Wenn wir uns gegen die Geistlichkeit erheben und aufblähen," &c.

I subjoin the original passage with some of the context, from the edition of Georgius. "Si non omnes Monogamiæ tenentur, unde Monogami in clerum? An ordo aliquis seorsum debebit institui Monogamorum, de quo adlectio fiat in clerum? Sed quum extollimur et inflamur adversus clerum, tunc unum sumus, tunc omnes sacerdotes; quia sacerdotes nos Deo et patri fecit; quum ad perrequationem disciplinæ sacerdotalis provocamur, deponimus infulas et impares sumus." Now the part "tunc unum sumus," &c. is clearly ironical. It is the argument which the persons he addresses were too fond of using, and Tertullian speaks their language, and turns it upon themselves. Tertullian complains that those who were so ready to claim *an equality of spiritual rights with the priesthood*, were by no means equally ready to share any burdens incumbent on it. It was necessary to quote thus much to put the reader in full possession of the whole sense of the passage.—H. J. R.]

[6] Eusebius, vi. 19.

wise a very hierarchical work,) which consists of multifarious elements, gradually collected together, there is an order under the name of St. Paul to this effect: *If any man, even a layman be skilled in the expounding of doctrines, and of reputable life, let him teach, for all must be taught by God*[7].

At first, it is highly probable that those who undertook the Church offices in various congregations, continued their former calling, and maintained themselves and their families by it afterwards, as they had done before. The congregations, which consisted for the most part of poor members, were not in a state to provide for the maintenance of their presbyters and deacons, especially as they had from the very beginning so many other demands on their Church chest, for the support of helpless widows, of the sick, and of orphans. It might happen that the presbyters belonged to the most wealthy part of the community, and this must have been often the case, because their office required a certain previous secular education, which would be more easily met with among the higher or the middle, than the lower orders. Since the presbyters, or bishops, were to distinguish themselves among the Christians, to whom they were to afford a pattern in all respects, by hospitality, (1 Tim. iii. 2.) they must have belonged to the wealthier classes, of whom there were not many in the first Churches,—and how could persons of that kind have borne to receive their maintenance out of funds that arose from the hard savings of their poorer brethren! St. Paul[8], indeed, expressly declares that those who travelled about to preach the Gospel were justified in suffering themselves to receive the supply of their earthly wants from those for whose spiritual advantage they were labouring; but we have no right from this to draw the same conclusion with regard to the Church officers of particular communities. The former could not well unite the business necessary to earn their livelihood with the labours of their spiritual calling, although the self-denial of a Paul rendered even this possible; the others, on the contrary, might perfectly well unite, at first, the continuance of

[7] Book viii. ch. 32.

[8] [I suppose the passage here alluded to is 1 Cor. ix. 1—14, and I would request those who are interested in these questions to read it attentively, and say whether there is any thing in it which applies only to persons *who travelled about* to preach the Gospel, or rather whether it does not concern all ministers, especially ver. 13. —H. J. R.]

their employments with the execution of their duty in the Church; and the primitive ideas of Christians might find nothing offensive in such an union, as men were persuaded that every earthly employment may be sanctified by the Christian feeling in which it is carried on, and they knew that even an apostle himself had united the exercise of a trade with the preaching of the Gospel. But when the members of the Churches became more numerous, and the duties of the Church officers were increased, especially when the office of teaching was limited, in great measure, to the presbyters; when the calling of spiritual persons, if they performed it duly, began to require their whole time and activity; it was often no longer possible for them to provide at the same time for their own support, and the richer Churches were also in circumstances to maintain them. From the Church fund, which was formed by the voluntary contributions of every member of the Church, at every Sunday service, or, as in the North African Church, on the first Sunday of every month[9], a part was used for the pay of the spiritual order. It was then sought expressly to detach spiritual persons from employing themselves with earthly business; in the third century they were already strictly forbidden to undertake any employment, even a guardianship[1]. This regulation might certainly have been founded on good grounds, and have an useful object, namely, to prevent spiritual persons from forgetting their spiritual calling, in consequence of their earthly employments; for we may see from Cyprian de Lapsis[2], how much even then the worldly spirit had made its way among the bishops during the long season of tranquillity, and that they were swallowed up with worldly affairs, and neglected their spiritual employments, and the advantage of their congregation. But here also the unevangelic notion of a separate priesthood, and a separate class of priests, made its

[9] The "divisiones mensurnæ," as the pay of spiritual persons in this Church, correspond to the monthly collection.

[1] Cyprian, Ep. lxvi. to the Church at Furnæ. (Ep. i. ed. Ox.)

[2] Also, in the eighteenth chapter of the Council of Elvira (Illiberis), i. 305. "Episcopi, presbyteri, et diaconi de locis suis negotiandi causa non discedant nec circumeuntes provincias quæstuosas nundinas sectentur." And yet it is here also supposed, that in many cases they might be compelled "ad victum sibi conquirendum," as when for instance, if they received any pay at all, they received none in money; but then in these cases they only exercised their trade by means of a son, or a freed man, or a person hired for the purpose, and then not beyond the limits of their own province.

appearance again clearly, as well as an unevangelic contrast between spiritual and secular persons. Now this *false* separation and distinction of the spiritual persons very possibly might not contribute to instil into them a genuine evangelical feeling, but might, on the contrary, further worldly feelings, hidden under the pretended holiness of spiritual pride; if the clergy thought that, by a magical sanctity communicated to their order, independent of personal conduct, they were beings of a higher order, and if they fancied that by the "opus operatum" of their outward duties alone, independently of their heart and conduct, they could draw down and spread around them Divine graces; and if they looked upon themselves not as the *servants* of the Church, in the spirit of self-denial, but thought themselves supernatural mediators and priests for it. Cyprian quotes as the foundation of his prohibition, the passage from 2 Tim. ii. 4, but he feels thoroughly (a feeling which would then more naturally strike every one, because the character of a "miles Christi" was then considered the general calling of all Christians) that these words are to be applied to all Christians, who, as soldiers of Christ, were to perform their service faithfully, and to preserve themselves from every thing worldly and uncongenial, which might take possession of their hearts, and render them untrue to their "sacramentum militiæ:" he, therefore, only concludes thus:—"How far rather, inasmuch as *this* is addressed to all Christians, must those remain unentangled in worldly business, who, busied with Divine and spiritual things, do not stir from the Church, and ought to have no time for earthly and worldly affairs." The clergy ought also in the application of that passage to themselves, to shine before the Church as its pattern; and this indeed is a just application of the passage! Only then the unevangelic fancy would instantly fasten itself on, that man approaches nearer to God by an *outward* withdrawal from earthly things, and can become desecrated by the mere use of these things, as if sanctification and desecration did not consist solely in the disposition of the spirit and the heart to God or to the world.

In regard to the election into Church offices, the old principle was nevertheless constantly abided by, that the consent of the Church was required to ratify such an election, and that the Church was at liberty to bring forward objections against it. The emperor Alexander Severus was aware of this regulation of the Christian Church, and he appealed to it, when he wished to

introduce a similar course in the election of the civil magistrates in towns. When Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, separated from his Church by calamitous circumstances, named to Church offices, men of his neighbourhood who had particularly distinguished themselves in the persecution, he apologised for this arbitrary conduct, which had been wrung from him by necessity, before the laity and the clergy, and he writes to both: "[3] We are accustomed to call you together to consult previously to the consecration to spiritual offices, and to weigh the character and merits of all in a general consultation."

That principle was also recognised in the appointment to the episcopal office; it was the prevailing custom in the third century, and Cyprian deduced it from apostolic tradition, that the bishops of the province, with the clergy of the vacant Church, made the choice in presence of the congregation, who having seen the conduct of every one who could possibly be chosen, could give therefore the most sure testimony about them. Cyprian ascribed to the Church the right of choosing worthy bishops, or rejecting unworthy ones[4]. This right of approval or rejection, which belonged to the Church, was not an empty formality; it sometimes happened that before the usual arrangements for an election could take place, a bishop would be called upon by the voice of the Church, and the influence caused by this upon the elections was the cause of many divisions.

In other affairs of the Church, also, the participation of the laity was not altogether excluded. Cyprian declares (Ep. v.) that he had determined from the beginning of his episcopal office to do nothing without the consent of the community[5]. One of these Church affairs, in which all had an interest, was the reception again of those who had fallen away; and the enquiry which regarded this matter was to be undertaken with a meeting of the whole Church; for, according to Cyprian's judgment, this respect was due to the faith of those who had stood stedfast during the persecution[6]. There were, besides, individuals who did not belong to the clergy, and yet had obtained for themselves, by the reverence which they personally enjoyed, such an influence

[3] Ep. xxxiii. [Ep. xxxviii. ed. Ox.]

[4] Cyprian, in the name of a Synod, to the Churches of Leon and Astorga.

[5] Nihil sine consensu plebis gerere.

[6] Ep. xiii. (Ep. xviii. ed. Ox.) presente etiam stantium plebe, quibus et ipsis pro fide et timore suo honor habendus est.

over the administration of Church affairs, that even the clergy themselves could not easily oppose them. These were the heroes of the faith, those who had made their confession of faith before the heathen magistrates, in the sight of the tortures and of death, or under the torture—the "confessores." (We shall, in the course of the history of the divisions of the Church, have further occasion to consider the greatness of their influence more precisely.)

There is, however, here to be mentioned a peculiar arrangement, which we find in the North African Churches at the beginning of the fourth century, and which may, very probably, be the remains of an older and more general one. There were a class of leaders of the Church under the name of elders, "seniores plebis," who were expressly distinguished from the clerical body, and yet were considered as ecclesiastical persons (personæ ecclesiasticæ), who, as the representatives of the congregation, formed a middle class between the clergy and the laity, who were assembled together by the clergy in consultations on any matters of general interest, and who spoke in the name of the congregation, when any complaint was to be made against the clergy[7].

It may perhaps be said, that this was no old arrangement, but rather one which took its rise at a very late period, namely, after Christianity had become the prevailing religion in many cities and districts of northern Africa, and that, as civil forms had often been transferred to ecclesiastical business, the civil burgesses or aldermen became also Church officers, and that a particular place was assigned to them in the discussion of matters relating to the Church. But it is hardly probable, judging merely from the thing itself, that in a time, when the hierarchical principle was so prevalent, an arrangement so foreign to the spirit of hierarchy, and more consonant to the oldest and free constitution of the Church, should have been first set on foot. It is far more

[7] In a letter from a Numidian bishop, Purpurius, to another bishop, Silvanus of Cirta in Numidia, occurs the following passage: "Adhibete conclericos et seniores plebis ecclesiasticos viros." They were required to make enquiry into some differences which had arisen between the bishop and a deacon. In another letter of the same bishop, to the "clericos et seniores" of this city Cirta, all these persons being classed together, are desired to make enquiry into these differences, and compared in this respect to the elders, whom Moses called together to counsel.—"Sine consilio seniorum nihil agebatur. Itaque et vos, quos scio omnem sapientiam cœlestem et spiritalem habere, omni vestra virtute cognoscite, quæ sit dis sensio hæc et perducite ad pacem." Optat. Milevit. de schismate Donatistar. ed. Du Pin. fol. 169.

probable of itself, that this regulation should have been retained as a remnant of a freer spirit of Church government, and propagated with some change in its circumstances.

There is a remarkable declaration to this purpose by Hilary, who wrote a commentary on the epistles of St. Paul in the fourth century. He says, "Among all people age is honoured, and hence the synagogues, and afterwards the Church, had elders, without whose counsel nothing was undertaken in the Church. I know not by what neglect this has become obsolete, unless it be by the laziness, or rather by the pride of the teachers, who fancy that they alone are of any consequence [8]."

The third, but less important change in the constitution of the Church, was in regard to the increase of Church offices. This arose partly from the circumstance that when the congregations became more numerous, and the deacons' business was much increased, much which had hitherto been transacted by them passed away from them, and was put into the hands of other officers; partly because many new employments in regard to the Churches arose in the great towns; and partly, because what had hitherto been esteemed the free gift of the Spirit on all, or on particular Christians, was now connected with one particular office. There were the following Church offices; the sub-deacons, who attended the deacons in the execution of their outward duties; the "lectores" (*ἀναγνῶσται*), who had to read the Holy Scriptures in the congregations, and to keep the copies of them used for this purpose, a duty, which probably at first either the presbyters themselves or the deacons had performed, for even in later times it remained the custom for the deacons particularly to read *the Gospels;* the acolyths (*ἀκολουθοι*),

[8] "Ecclesia seniores habuit, quorum sine consilio nihil agebatur in ecclesia. Quod qua negligentia obsoleverit nescio, nisi forte doctorum desidia, aut magis superbia, dum soli volunt aliqui videri." In order to evade the force of this passage, it may be said that here, under the name of *seniores*, the presbyters are understood, and that the disuse consisted in this, that these persons were no more called to debate by the doctors, *i. e.* the bishops, in all matters, as they had formerly been. But this explanation is by no means the most natural, neither is it apposite to the manner in which the word "doctores," nor that in which the word "seniores" is here used. This is more especially the case here, because the emphasis is expressly laid on the circumstance, that the "seniores" were literally the elder members of the Church; and this was certainly not true in regard to the presbyters, who were not usually above thirty years of age; and still more also because the passage alluded to (1 Tim. v.) has nothing in it to lead one to think of presbyters.

persons, as the name implies, who attended on the bishop in the duties of his office; the exorcist, who performed the duty of prayer over those whom men believed possessed by evil spirits (see above), *i. e.* the "energumeni;" and the θυρωροι, πυλωροι, "ostiarii," who had the management of such matters as related to the places of assembly, their cleaning, &c., and the opening and shutting of the Church-doors, &c.

The office of reader is, perhaps, the oldest among these, it is mentioned by Tertullian (Præscript. Hæret. c. 41) at the end of the second century; the others made their appearance together about the middle of the third century, and are all fully mentioned for the first time in a letter of the Romish bishop Cornelius, in Euseb. vi. 43. The office of an acolyth most probably arose from the hierarchical love of splendour in the Romish Church, and it did not extend to the Greek; and the Greek name is quite compatible with a Romish origin, by means of the Greek extraction of so many of the Romish bishops. As far as regards the office of exorcist, that which was performed by him, was originally considered as a work of the Holy Spirit, not connected with any outward institution, whether it was thought a work that might be performed by every Christian in faithful reliance on the overcomer of all evil, the Saviour, by calling on his name, or whether it was thought a peculiar gift of individual Christians. Now, it seems, the free work of the Spirit was to be connected with a lifeless mechanism; and yet the Apostolic Constitutions properly express the spirit of the old Church in opposition to such an order, when they say, "an exorcist cannot be chosen, for it is the gift of free grace[9]."

We pass now from the general constitution of the Churches, to the means of union in the several Churches between each other.

(2) *The bonds of connexion between the various Churches with one another.*

CHRISTIANITY produced among its genuine professors from the first a lively Catholic spirit, and thence also an inward and mutual as well as outward connection. This connexion must,

[9] Lib. viii. c. 26. οὐ χειροτονειται, εὐνοιας γαρ ἑκουσιου το ἐπαθλον, και χαριτος Θεου δια Χριστου.

from the nature of human things, assume a definite form, and this form was modelled after the existing form of those social connexions, among which Christianity first made its appearance. A sisterly system of equality, in the relation of the Churches to each other, would, independently of these particular circumstances, have best corresponded to the spirit of Christianity, and might have been most advantageous to its free and undisturbed publication. But these circumstances soon introduced a system of subordination into the relations of the Churches to each other, into which Christianity might enter, just as into all other human institutions, which contain nothing that is sinful by its very nature; but this system afterwards obtaining too great sway, exercised a restraining and destructive influence on the development of Christian doctrines and life.

We have before remarked, that in many districts Christianity early extended itself into the country; and where this happened, and the Christians were numerous enough in a village or country-town to form a separate Church, it was most natural that they should at once choose their own presidents, presbyters, or bishops, who would be as independent as those of the Churches in the cities. In the very first centuries, however, from a want of documents relating to these times, we cannot point out any thing of the kind, but in the fourth century we find in many parts of the east those called country-bishops (χωρεπισκοποι), who certainly derive their origin from the earliest times, for in later periods, when once the system of Church subordination had been formed, and when the country-churches were accustomed to receive their presidents from the city, a relation of this kind certainly could not have sprung up; which is proved by the struggle of the country-bishops of this time with the bishops of the cities, who endeavoured to limit their power. But the more common case was, as we have before remarked, that Christianity extended itself first from cities to the country round, and as there were at first but few Christians in the country, in the neighbourhood of the city, it was most natural that they should at first go to the city on a Sunday, in order to frequent the assemblies held there. But when afterwards their number so increased, that they could form a Church of their own, they allowed the bishop of the Church in the city, which they had been accustomed to join, to appoint them a presbyter, who thence remained

always subject to the bishop. Thus arose the first great Church union between the Churches [Gemeinden] of the city and of the country, which together formed one whole[1]. In the greater cities it might have already become necessary to divide the congregations in the city into different portions, as in Rome, where in the report of the Romish bishop Cornelius, which we have quoted, we find already six and forty presbyters, although the account of Optatus of Mileve, that in Rome, at the beginning of the fourth century, there were more than forty churches [Kirchen] is an exaggeration. Nevertheless, it did not always happen that different Daughter-Churches, subject to the head and Mother-Church, were formed, but it was oftener the case that the Church remained as one whole, and it was only on Sundays and festivals, when one church could not contain them all, that they were divided among different churches, where the different presbyters conducted divine service after a certain cycle. We are, however, deficient in accounts of all that relates to this matter for this period, and we can only draw any conclusions by reasoning back from what we find in later times.

We may further remark, that as Christianity generally first spread from the towns into the country, so also did it generally extend itself (see above) from the capitals (Μητροπολεις) into the other towns of the province. As now these latter were politically subject to the former, there was gradually formed between the Churches of the provincial towns and those of the metropolis, a closer connexion and a relation of subordination. The Churches of the province formed a whole, at the top of which was the Church of the metropolis, and the bishop of the latter was in regard to the other bishops of the province "primus inter pares." In consequence, however, of local causes, this relation did not always develope itself in the same manner, and for the most part it took place during this period only in the east.

In the same relation, in which these metropolitan towns stood to the provincial towns, were also the chief cities of the greater divisions of the Roman empire to these latter, as the seats of government, and the head-quarters of commercial and other intercourse. From such chief cities Christianity had spread itself into a whole great division of the enormous Roman empire, here the apostles themselves had founded Churches, appointed

[1] Such presidents of country Churches were those, of whom Cyprian spoke at the tribunal of the proconsul, when he said, "Invenientur in civitatibus suis."

pastors, preached the Gospel with their own mouth, and they had written Epistles to the Churches founded here by themselves. These Churches were regarded with peculiar reverence, under the name of "ecclesiæ, sedes apostolicæ, matrices ecclesiæ." When any contest arose about Church discipline or doctrine, the first enquiry was, "How do people look on the matter in those Churches, where the principles delivered there by the apostles themselves, which have descended from generation to generation, have been faithfully maintained?" Such "ecclesiæ apostolicæ" were especially Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth.

But all these circumstances, which met together in the Churches of the great chief cities, centered in a peculiar degree in the Church of Rome, the capital of the world. It was known, that the two great apostles, St. Paul, and St. Peter, had taught in this Church, and had ennobled it by their martyrdom[2]. From Rome a large portion of the West had received the Gospel, from Rome all the general concerns of the Christian part of the Roman empire could best be directed, the Roman bishops, as pastors of the richest Churches, had early distinguished themselves by their benevolence to the most remote Churches[3], and a general interest united all the Churches of the Roman empire with that of the capital. In Rome was the "ecclesia apostolica," to which, as the common Mother-Church, the greater part of the West must appeal. For the most part, whatever took place in this "ecclesia apostolica," would be best known to all, for Christians were constantly flocking to Rome from all quarters. Thus Irenæus, who wrote in Gaul, as he sometimes appeals to other "ecclesiæ apostolicæ," in one passage particularly appeals to the "ecclesia apostolica" in Rome, as the greatest and the oldest (though this last may be doubted), as one known to all, and founded by the two most celebrated apostles, where Christians meet together from the Churches of the whole world, and the doctrines delivered by the apostles would necessarily be observed[4].

By means of letters, and of brethren who travelled about, even

[2] It is hypercritical to call in question the tradition preserved by the harmonious testimony of ecclesiastical antiquity, that St. Peter was at Rome. This tradition clearly comes down to us from a time in which men had not yet thought of upholding the supremacy of the Romish Church by means of the primacy of St. Peter.

[3] Euseb. lib. iv. c. 23.

[4] Lib. iii. c. 3, in the Latin translation, for alas! the Greek original is lost. "Ad hanc ecclesiam propter potiorem principalitatem necesse est, omnem conve-

the most remote Churches of the Roman empire were connected together. When a Christian arrived in a strange town, he first enquired for the Church [Gemeinde, *literally* congregation], and he was here received as a brother, and provided with every thing needful for his spiritual or corporeal sustenance. But since deceivers, spies with evil intentions, and false teachers, who sought only to propagate their unevangelical doctrines among the simple-minded Christians, abused the confidence and the kindness of Christians, some measures of precaution became necessary, in order to avert the many injuries which might result from this conduct. An arrangement was therefore introduced, that only *such* travelling Christians should be received, as brethren, into Churches where they were strangers, as could produce a testimonial from the bishop of the Church from which they came. They called these Church letters, which were a kind of "tesseræ hospitales," by which the Christians of all quarters of the world were brought into connexion, "epistolæ" or "literæ formatæ" (γραμματα τετυπωμενα,) because, in order to avoid forgery, they were made after a certain schema[5], (τυπος, forma,) or else "epistolæ communicatoriæ, γραμματα κοινωνικα," because they contained a proof that those who brought them were in the communion of the Church, as well as that the bishops, who mutually sent and received such letters, were in connexion together by the

nire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos, qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his, qui sunt undique, conservata est ea, quæ est ab apostolis traditio." If we understand "convenire" in an intellectual sense, thus—All the Churches must *agree with* the Romish Church, as that which has the pre-eminence,—the passage affords no natural meaning, and far less such an one as would suit the other ideas of Irenæus. What would be the sense of saying: The Churches in the whole world have in the Romish Church retained the apostolical traditions? This could only be understood to mean, that the Romish Church was the central and representative point of all Christian Churches, as if (which was said in later times) the whole Church was "virtualiter" contained in the Romish; a notion, of which no trace whatever can be found in Irenæus, and an expression which is entirely foreign to this whole period. And besides, what need would there then have been of the explanatory addition, "eos qui sunt ubique fideles," as with such a context there could be no misunderstanding about the word "ecclesia." But all becomes quite clear, if we understand "*convenire*" of appearing personally, and then this addition is quite in place to shew that here he is speaking of the Churches, not as a whole, but only of individual believers out of all Churches. Instead of "conservare" we must then read "observare." Compare the similar passage of Athenæus, lib. iii. p. 20, about the confluence of all cities and people to the οὐρανοπολις Rome, ὁτι οἰκουμενης δημος ἡ ῥωμη, ἡ ῥωμαιων πολις ἐπιτομη της οἰκουμενης, ἐν ᾗ συνιδειν ἐστιν οὑτως πασας τας πολεις ἱδρυμενας.

[5] We may see from Cyprian, Ep. iii. (viii. ed. Ox.) and Euseb. iv. 23, how necessary it was to guard against counterfeits of these letters.

communion of the Church; and afterwards these Church letters (epistolæ clericæ) were divided into different classes, according to the difference of their purposes.

As we above remarked that a closer bond of union was early formed between the Churches of the same province, so also the Christian catholic spirit [Gemeingeist] introduced the custom that, in all pressing matters, controversies on doctrinal points, things relating to the ecclesiastical life, and very commonly in those relating to Church discipline, general deliberations should be held by deputies from these Churches. Such assemblies become familiar to us in the controversies about the time of celebrating Easter, and in the transactions about the Montanistic prophecies, in the last half of the second century. But these provincial synods do not appear, as a constant and regular institution, fixed to definite times, until about the end of the second or the beginning of the third century; and it was in this case a peculiarity of one country, where particular local causes may have introduced *such* an arrangement earlier than in other regions. This country was in fact exactly Greece, where, from the time of the Achaic league, the system of confederation had maintained itself; and as Christianity is able to connect itself with all the peculiarities of a people, provided they contain nothing immoral, and entering into them, to take itself a peculiar form resembling them, so also it might easily happen, that here the civil federal spirit, which already existed, worked upon the ecclesiastical catholic spirit, and gave it earlier than in other regions a tolerably good form, so that out of the representative assemblies of the civil communities, (the Amphictyonic councils,) were formed the representative assemblies of the ecclesiastical communities, (*i. e.* the provincial synods). As the Christians, in the consciousness that they are nothing, and can do nothing, without the Spirit from above, were accustomed to begin all important business with prayer, they prepared themselves here also for their general deliberations by common prayer, at the opening of these assemblies, to Him, who has promised that He will enlighten and guide, by his Spirit, those who believe in Him, if they will give themselves up to Him wholly, and that He will be amongst them, where they are gathered together in his name [6].

[6] The following passage is from Tertullian, in a book written at the beginning of the third century, De Jejuniis, c. xiii. "Aguntur per Græcias illa *certis in locis*

It appears that this regular institution met at first with opposition as an innovation, so that Tertullian felt himself called upon to stand up in its defence[7]. Nevertheless, the ruling spirit of the Church decided for this institution, and down to the middle of the third century, the annual provincial synods appear to have been general in the Church, if we may draw this conclusion from the fact, that we find them prevalent, at the same time, in parts of the Church as far distant from each other as North Africa and Cappadocia[8].

These provincial synods might certainly become very useful for the Churches, and, in many respects, they did become so. By means of a general deliberation, the views of individuals might mutually be enlarged and corrected; wants, abuses, and necessary reforms, might thus more easily be mutually communicated; and be deliberated on in many different points of view, and the experience of every individual, by being communicated, might be made useful to all. Certainly, men had every right to trust that Christ would be among them, according to his promise, and would lead those, who were assembled *in his name*, by his Spirit. Certainly, it was neither enthusiasm nor hierarchical presumption, if the deputies collected together to consult upon the affairs of their Churches, and the pastors of these Churches, hoped that a higher Spirit than that of man, by *His* illumination, would shew them what they could never find by their own reason, whose insufficiency they felt deeply, if it were left to itself. It would far rather have been a proud self-confidence, had they been so little acquainted with the shallowness of their own heart, the poverty of human reason, and the self-deceits of human wisdom, as to expect that, without the influence of that higher Spirit of holiness and truth, they could provide sufficiently for the advantage of their Churches.

But this confidence, in itself just and salutary, took a false and destructive turn, when it was not constantly accompanied by the spirit of humility and self-watchfulness, with fear and trembling; when men were not constantly mindful of the important condition under which alone man could hope to share in the fulfil-

concilia, per quæ et altiora quæque in commune tractantur et ipsa *repræsentatio* totius nominis Christiani magna veneratione celebratur."

[7] Ista solennia, quibus tunc præsens patrocinatus est sermo.

[8] Cyprian, Ep. xl. and Firmilianus of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, in Cyprian, Ep. lxxv. "Necessario apud nos fit, ut per singulos annos seniores et præpositi in unum convenianmus, ad disponenda ea, quæ curæ nostræ commissa sunt."

ment of that promise, in that Divine illumination and guidance—the condition, that they were really assembled in the name of Christ, in lively faith in Him, and honest devotion to Him, and prepared to sacrifice their own wills; and when people gave themselves up to the fancy, that such an assembly, whatever might be the hearts of those who were assembled, had unalienable claims to the illumination of the Holy Spirit; for then, in the confusion and the intermixture of human and Divine, men were abandoned to every kind of self-delusion, and the formula, "by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit," (Spiritu sancto suggerente) might become a pretence and sanction for all the suggestions of man's own will.

And further, the provincial synods would necessarily become prejudicial to the progress of the Churches, if, instead of providing for the advantage of the Churches according to the changing wants of each period, they wished to lay down unchanging laws in changeable things. Evil was it at last, that the participation of the Churches [Gemeinden] was entirely excluded from these synods, that at length the bishops alone decided every thing in them, and that their power, by means of their connexion with each other in these synods, was constantly on the increase.

As the provincial synods were also accustomed to communicate their resolutions to distant bishops, in weighty matters of general concernment, they were serviceable, at the same time, towards setting distant parts of the Church in connexion with each other, and maintaining that connexion.

(3.) *The union of the whole Church into one whole, closely bound together in all its parts—The external Unity of the Romish Church.*

Thus, from the obscure grain of mustard-seed, sown in the world's field, did the tree proceed, which increased above all the produce of the earth, and its branches extended themselves in all directions; namely, this great whole of the Catholic Church, which in all its scattered parts was still firmly united, and which, in its origin, its development, and its constitution, was utterly different from all mere human institutions. The consciousness of being a member of such a body, victorious over every opposition of earthly power, and destined for eternity, must have been

more lively and more powerful in those who, having, in their earlier years of heathenism, known no bonds of union except those of a political and secular nature, had been blessed with no feelings of such a moral and spiritual bond of unity, which bound mankind together, as all members of the same heavenly community. Therefore must this feeling have been stronger and more lofty, when all the powers from without sought in vain to tear this bond in sunder. Justly might this unity, which revealed itself outwardly, this close bond of outward connexion, be of great importance to Christians, as the symbol of that higher life, by the participation in which all Christians were to be united together, as the revelation of the unity of the kingdom of God. In the outward communion of the Church they perceived the blessing of the inward communion of the invisible kingdom of God, and they struggled for the maintenance of that unity, partly against the idealistic sects, who threatened to tear in sunder the inward bond of religious communion, the bond of faith, to introduce also into the Christian Church the old division between a religion for those in a high state of cultivation and a religion for the people (πιστις and γνωσις), and, as Clement of Alexandria justly accused them, to distract the one Church, and divide it into a multitude of theosophic schools[9]; and partly against those who, blinded by self-will or passion, founded divisions on mere outward causes, while they agreed in faith with the rest.

But this polemical spirit, though it proceeded from a lively Christian feeling, which deeply felt the blessing of religious communion, this inward life in the Church, though it proceeded from a truly Christian source of warmth, was apt to seduce men into the opposite extreme of over-prizing the external unity of the Church, and of over-prizing the existing forms in the Church, with which that unity was combined. As men in the churchly life, as long as it proceeded from inward feelings of Christianity, and was still animated and penetrated by them, and ere it had been benumbed in dead forms, became conscious of this intimate connexion between the visible and the invisible Church; as men, in the communion of this visible Church, felt deeply the blessing of communion with the Redeemer and with the whole body of saints, which receives its Divine living powers from Him,

[9] The words of Clement (Str. vii. 755.) are, αὐχουσι προιστασθαι διατριβης μαλλον ἡ ἐκκλησιας.

its head, and spreads them among its individual members; it was more likely on that account, in this polemical contrast, that they should be led away, so as too closely to interweave in idea also, that which had been thus joined and melted together in the experience and the feelings of every one, and also to lay it down in theory, that it was bound together in a necessary and indissoluble union. And thus then arose the confusion between the visible and the invisible Church, the confusion of the inward union of the invisible Church, an union of spirit which consists in faith and love, with the outward unity of the visible Church, which is dependent on certain and outward forms. As these forms of the Church were the instruments through which, by means of the feelings engendered on these forms, men had received the blessing of communion with the invisible Head of the Church, they were more easily induced too closely to join together form and essentials, the vessel of clay and the inestimable heavenly treasure, to attribute too much to the earthly form, and to consider a subjective union, in the life and hearts of individuals, as an objective and necessary one. This principle would form itself in the following mode: the external Church, which exists in this visible outward form, is, with all these outward forms, a Divine institution; we cannot make a distinction here between human and Divine; under this form has the Church received Divine things from Christ, and only under this form does she communicate them, and he alone can receive them who *receives* them from her in this *outward* form. The invisible Church, the kingdom of God, is represented in this outward form; and inward communion with that invisible Church, as well as the participation of all her advantages, is necessarily connected with outward communion with this external Church, which exists in these forms.

The confusion between the views of the Old and those of the New Testament on the theocracy, which we remarked above in the notions of the priesthood, also made its appearance again here. As in the Old Testament, the establishment and the extension of the theocracy was necessarily connected with many outward earthly things, which were only shadows and figures of that which was to appear in all its reality in Christianity, men would have it, that the theocracy of the New Testament must also depend for its establishment and propagation on similar visible and earthly things; as the theocracy of the Old Testament was

necessarily joined with a definite outward and visible priesthood, so also they would have it, that that of the New Testament was also necessarily joined with an outward priesthood of the same sort, divinely founded also. Men forgot that the difference between the Church of Christ and the theocracy in the Old Testament, did not merely consist in the difference of outward signs and forms, but that there was a far more important distinction in the relation of the outward to the inward, of earthly things to heavenly and spiritual things. This is a most essential error, and has been the source of many other errors, with consequences of practical importance, which afterwards gradually unfolded themselves.

We find this confusion between the conception of the invisible and the visible Church, and the doctrine which was deduced from it, of an *outward* Church which could alone confer salvation, and hence of a necessary outward unity of that Church, first most decidedly pronounced and carried through most logically, in the remarkable book on the unity of the Church, (de unitate ecclesiæ,) which Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, wrote after the middle of the third century, in the midst of the divisions with which he had to contend. This book contains a striking mixture of falsehood and truth. If we understand what Cyprian says, as referring to the communion of a higher life, to the necessary inward union with the one divine source of life in Christ, from which alone true life can flow forth on all the members of the communion of saints, and to the necessary communion between this body and their head, through the direction of the heart in faith and feelings:—if we introduce into the conclusions of Cyprian, the difference between a visible and an invisible Church, between the inward unity of the kingdom of God, and the outward unity of a visible Church; between an inward communion with the Church of the redeemed, and an outward connexion with a certain outward form, under which that Church, whose foundations are in the inward heart, in faith and in love, appears; —then, indeed, we shall find much truth in what he says against a proud and self-seeking spirit, which struggles to get free from its connexion with the one kingdom of God, whose head, foundation, and centre-point, is Christ, and is anxious to set itself up as something independent. "Only endeavour," says Cyprian, "to free the sun-beam from the sun! the unity of light will not be broken. Break the branch from the tree, and it can bear no

fruit! Dissever the stream from the source, and it dries up! Thus also the Church, beamed upon by the light of the Lord, extends its beams over all the world, but it is still only one light, which spreads itself into all directions; from the bosom of that Church are we all born, nourished by her milk, and animated by her spirit. That which is torn asunder from the original stem, can neither breathe, nor live separate and independent[1]." This is certainly all just enough, if we understand by that original whole, in connexion with which alone each individual can thrive, the invisible Church of the redeemed under their invisible head, Christ; if we attribute that unity only to spiritual communion, and that separation only to a separation in heart; but the fundamental error, by which every thing which is really true in itself received a false application, was the transference of these notions from all this to an external Church, appearing under distinct outward forms, and necessarily dependent on them; a Church, which had maintained itself from the time of the apostles, under its existing constitution, by means of the bishops, its pillars, the successors of the apostles, and the heirs of the power, which had been delivered to the apostles. Christ, according to this view, had imparted to the apostles, and the apostles, by ordination, had imparted to the bishops, the power of the Holy Ghost; by means of this external transmission, the power of the Holy Ghost, by which alone all religious acts can receive their true efficiency, was shed abroad and preserved to all times through the succession of bishops. Thus by this living and constantly progressing organization of the Church, was maintained that Divine life, which is imparted by this intermediate step from the head to all the members that remain in union with this organization; and he who cuts himself off from outward communion with this outward organization, shuts himself out from that Divine life and from the way to salvation. No one can, as an isolated individual, by faith in the Redeemer, receive a share in the Divine life, which proceeds from Him; no one can, by this faith alone, secure for himself all the advantages of the kingdom of God, but to all this man can alone attain by the instrumentality of the Catholic Church, which has been preserved by the succession of bishops.

Now those who conceived the spirit of the New Testament

[1] [See Cyprian, p. 108, ed. Fell. This is the substance of a part of Cyprian's treatise, but not a literal translation of any part of it.—H. J. R.]

with a more unprejudiced and purer mind, appealed with justice against this confusion of the visible and the invisible Church, to the promise of our Saviour, that, "where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them:" Matt. xviii. 20; and they contended that every union of the really faithful, under whatsoever form it might be, was a true Church. But Cyprian answers this objection by saying, that Christ has at the same time set forth harmony among the faithful, the unity of hearts in love, as the condition on which the fulfilment of this promise rests. He therefore concludes, "How can such a one be in harmony with any one, when he is not in harmony with the body of the Church itself, and with the whole host of the brethren? How can two or three be gathered together in the name of Christ, if they are severed from Christ and from his Gospel?" Taken by itself, undoubtedly, the remark is just, that the being together in the name of Christ includes alike the communion of brotherly love and the communion of faith. He might also justly say, that those only, in whom this mark was present, could apply this promise to themselves, and he might justly oppose the application of it to those who, impelled by a self-seeking and an unkindly spirit, had founded divisions in the Church. But he was wrong also here, because he was confounding cause and effect; these separatists were not excluded from the fulfilment of that promise, because they had departed from outward communion with the great body of the Church; not through this outward separation, but through the feeling from which their outward separation had proceeded: yes! through that feeling were they excluded from inward communion with Christ, and from his kingdom, even before they had outwardly separated from the visible Church. And, therefore, none but the Judge who can search the inward heart, could decide whether such persons were excluded from the kingdom of God by their evil heart; but that outward act was always a fallacious token to determine that such an evil heart existed. As the visible Church, considered in itself alone, is not the spotless Church of saints, and always bears many marks of the old and sinful nature upon her, which may have led men to mistake the character really belonging to her; therefore, many may have been actuated by innocent motives, to quit a Church in which they could not recognise the Church of the saints. There might be right and wrong on both sides, and misunderstandings on

both sides, and neither party was, therefore, justified in judging the other, and instantly to condemn on account of outward acts, which may have proceeded out of very different motives.

As a false principle, by means of the deductions which develope themselves from it, is the source of many errors, so the error of a necessary visible unity of the Church led to the erroneous idea of a necessary outward representation of this unity. This notion, in its first germ apparently very indistinct, and of little signification, became, as it was further unfolded, full of important consequences.

Such a representation of the unity of the Church men found at first in the relation of St. Peter to the other apostles, a conclusion to which an unprejudiced consideration of history and Scripture could not give rise. No trace is there found of any pre-eminence assigned to St. Peter over the other apostles, and such pre-eminence would have been contrary to the brotherly relation, in which the apostles stood to each other, and to the spirit of the economy of the New Testament, in which all, looking only to one Guide and one Master, were to serve each other mutually. Such worldly thoughts of grandeur, proceeding from carnal pride, had indeed scattered their seeds into the breasts of the apostles, but it was before they had been born again of the Spirit; but how completely did their Divine Master condemn such thoughts; how expressly did He show them that they should speak of nothing like pre-eminence, but only of a contest of humility, of self-denial, and mutual service. With Him, none should make himself the first, but each the least among them all: Luke xxii. 24. St. Peter had his own peculiar charisma; He who looks into man's *inmost* heart, had recognised in him from the very beginning the future rock of faith: He brought into the service of the holiest things the fiery disposition of St. Peter, and his thorough-going activity, qualities we must avow, which first required the influence of the Spirit from on high to change their carnal turn into a spiritual, to purify and to ennoble them. Through these means, Peter might become in a peculiar degree an instrument capable of furthering the kingdom of God; after becoming, through that purification of his earthly fire of disposition, the rock of faith and power, he was to strengthen and confirm the weaker brethren: Luke xxii. 32. But, for all this, he had no pre-eminence above the rest of the apostles, the others had again other charismata, by which they would be enabled to

effect what his graces might be unfitted for. When Christ called Peter the Rock on which He would build his Church, (Matth. xvi. 18.) this significant declaration did not refer to any station among the apostles, peculiarly assigned to St. Peter, nor on the person of St. Peter alone, but on St. Peter, as the real and lively confessor of faith in Jesus, as our Messiah, the Son of the living God,—that faith, which is the inviolably firm foundation of a Church, against which even the gates of hell shall not prevail. All who have received this faith, not merely in the letter by human teaching, which can never *give* such a faith, but in spirit and in truth through the inward revelation of the heavenly Father, therefore become, like St. Peter, rocks and pillars of the Church of Christ, which all the powers of hell shall never conquer. To all such, in the person of St. Peter, as Tertullian and Origen have well remarked, is this word of the Lord spoken. The same spiritual power which Christ bestows in this place on St. Peter, He attributes in the same manner to the rest of the apostles in other passages. Matt. xviii. 18; John xx. 22.

In the conversation which our Saviour held with this apostle after the resurrection, (John xxi. 15.) He certainly had no intention of investing him with any pre-eminence over the rest; but it was by far rather his intention, to try a mild reproof of St. Peter's former self-confidence, which his subsequent conduct had contradicted and shown to be unfounded, to exhort him to faithfulness in his calling, which was no other than that of the rest of the apostles, and, indeed, of all preachers of the Gospel. As before, St. Peter, hurried on by his impetuous temper, in rash self-confidence, without rightly weighing the import of his words, had promised, that even if all the rest should yield to the fear of man, yet he would remain true to his Lord, and willingly give up his life for him, (John xiii. 37; Matt. xxvi. 35.) our Lord here reminds him, in words of mild reproof, but full of love, of this promise, which, because it had not proceeded from a spirit of humility, had come to shame: "Sayest thou still," He says to him, "that thou lovest me more than these thy fellow-disciples?" And St. Peter, now brought to a knowledge of himself, and to a spirit of humility, is in a totally different mood, and far from measuring himself with others, says, with a trembling spirit, "Oh! thou that knowest the heart, thou knowest how, notwithstanding that momentary fall, my heart burns with love to thee!" Our Saviour now points out to him, how this love must

show itself in actively fulfilling the duties of his calling, and what proof of his love he must one day be ready to give. This love must show itself in a faithful care of the souls of men, who are to be brought, by the preaching of the Gospel, to the one true common Shepherd[2], who alone can satisfy all their wants. He who, when his hour of suffering was at hand, deserted his Lord, was, through love to Him, to receive the power as a true shepherd of human souls, after the example of Christ, to sacrifice his life in the calling of a preacher of the Gospel.

History, and the interpretation of Scripture, therefore, never could have given rise to the notion of an apostolic primacy of St. Peter, unless, as often happens, men had set out from preconceived ideas, and sought and found a foundation for them to rest upon in individual passages, which they dissevered from the historical and logical context, and which they made to mean every thing, which *the mere words*, taken by themselves, could possibly signify. So did it here happen, that when once the idea of a necessary visible unity of the Church had been formed, an idea, from which the notion of a visible representation of this unity in some definite spot in the Church could easily develope itself, this latter notion found support and foundation in a misunderstanding of the passages relating to St. Peter.

Cyprian justly remarks, in his book on the Unity of the Church, that all the apostles had received from Christ the same dignity and power as St. Peter; but yet, in one place, thought he, Christ imparts this power especially to St. Peter; he says in particular of him, that He will build his Church on him; He commits the care of his sheep to him in particular, to show how the development of the Church and of the priesthood should proceed from one point, and to point attention to the unity of the Church and of the episcopal power. The apostle Peter is here the representative of the one Church, remaining stedfast in her unity, which proceeded from a Divine foundation, and of the one episcopal power, a power which, although it be diffused among many organs, still is, and remains only one in its origin and nature. And therefore, he who departs from outward communion with the one visible, catholic Church, tears himself away from that representation of the unity of the Church, which was annexed, by Divine appointment, to the person of St. Peter.

[2] See the parable in John x.

How then can any one expect to remain a member of the Church of Christ, while he quits the *Cathedra Petri*, on whom the Church is founded[3]?

But although we should agree to recognise the apostle Peter as the representative of the unity of the Church, it by no means follows that a similar representative must exist in all the ages of the Church. It follows still less, that this representative must necessarily be in connexion with the Romish Church; for although the tradition that St. Peter visited the Church at Rome has never been called in question on any sufficient grounds, yet it is quite certain that he did not found this Church, and that he had never been in any particular manner its president. This Church can as little be called the Cathedra Petri, as the Cathedra Pauli. Irenæus and Tertullian are aware that St. Peter and St. Paul founded this Church, and gave it a bishop, and that they ennobled it by making it the scene of their martyrdom; but they were quite ignorant of any pre-eminence of the Romish Church over other "sedes apostolicæ," as the cathedra Petri. Hence, as the idea of the outward unity of the Church might generate that of an outward representative of that unity, so also the conception of this representative, in the person of the apostle Peter, might easily receive such an application, as if such a representative of the outward unity of the Church in one definite spot in the Church, essentially belonged to the outward unity of the Church, and to all periods. And as most of the Western Churches were now accustomed to consider the Church of Rome as their mother-Church, as the "ecclesia apostolica," to whose authority they specially appealed; as they were accustomed to call St. Peter the founder of the Romish Church, and to quote the tradition of that Church as proceeding from him; as Rome was then the seat of the political unity of dominion; it came to pass, that men became accustomed to look upon the Church of Rome as the Cathedra Petri, and to transfer what was usually said of St. Peter, as the representative of the unity of the Church, to this Cathedra Petri. In Cyprian

[3] One trace of this method of explaining the expressions relating to St. Peter, is found in Tertullian, Præscript. Hæret. c. xxii. This is a proof of the non-Montanistic spirit of that work, because, on the contrary, in his work, de Pudicitia, where he speaks as a Montanist, he applies these passages to the person of St. Peter only as an "homo spiritalis," and makes them also applicable to all who were "spiritales," as well as St. Peter.

we find this connexion of ideas already thus formed. We need not refer to the passage in the book de Unitate Ecclesiæ, in which the reading is doubtful[4]; in a passage beyond all controversy (Ep. lv. ad Cornel. Ep. lix. ed. Ox.) he calls the Church of Rome "Petri cathedra, ecclesia principalis, unde unitas sacerdotalis exorta est."

It must be confessed that this idea was at first very confused and indefinite, but after the false principle had once been admitted and firmly rooted, it might be just so much the more introduced into such an indefinite representation, and unfold itself the better therefrom. This idea appears early to have obtained a firm and definite form in the minds of the bishops of Rome and Roman ambition also appears early to have mingled itself with ecclesiastical matters, and to have come forward in a spiritual garb.

We observe that already, in early times, there were traces in the Romish bishops of an assumption, that a peculiarly decisive authority was due to them, as the successors of St. Peter, in Church controversies, and that the "cathedra Petri" was to have a prevailing sway before all other "ecclesiæ apostolicæ," as the source of apostolical tradition. The Romish bishop Victor gave a specimen of this assumption, when he excommunicated the Churches of Asia Minor, about A.D. 190, in consequence of a trifling dispute about a mere external point[5]. In the Montanistic writings of Tertullian, we find that the Romish bishops had already issued peremptory edicts in ecclesiastical matters, and wished to make themselves considered as "episcopi epis-

[4] Even if the suspected words in the following passage, which are here inclosed in brackets, are genuine: "Qui ecclesiæ renititur et resistit, [qui cathedram Petri, super quem fundata est ecclesia, deserit,] in ecclesia se esse confidit?": we have no right immediately to conclude that he was here directly thinking of the cathedra Petri *in the Church of Rome*, as existing in his time, but according to the context, the clauses, "ecclesiæ reniti," and "cathedram Petri deserere," would be by far better taken in apposition, so as to make him say, "He who breaks loose from the one Church, invades and injures the representation of the unity of the Church, bound up in the person of St. Peter by Christ himself. The whole apostolical and episcopal power and might, although it is set forth in many different organs, is represented as one, in the spiritual power given by our Lord to St. Peter. To renounce obedience to the whole episcopatus, or the cathedra of all the bishops, considered as one whole—the Cathedra Petri—is here the meaning of the phrase to assault or invade the Cathedra Petri.

[5] A controversy about the time of celebrating Easter, which we shall have to mention in its proper place.

coporum[5]," and that they were in the habit of appealing to the authority of their "antecessores[6]."

The Romish bishop Stephanus allowed himself, after the middle of the second century, to be carried away by the same spirit of hierarchical encroachment as his predecessor Victor, and in a controversy of no importance[7], he also was desirous of imposing the tradition of the Romish Church as an invariable and decisive rule for all other Churches; and he excommunicated the Churches of Asia Minor and Africa, which would not submit to this rule[8].

But it was far from being the case, that these assumptions of the Church of Rome had penetrated the whole body of Christians: in the first-mentioned controversy, the Churches of Asia Minor, without being led into even a momentary error by the high language of a Victor, declared their principles, and they opposed the tradition of the Church of Rome by those of *their* "sedes apostolicæ." Irenæus, the bishop of Lyons, in a letter to the Romish bishop Victor, expressly blames his unchristian arrogance, although in the thing itself, which was the point in dispute, he agreed with him. He disapproved of the attempt of Victor to impose *one* form of churchly life upon all Churches; he declared that nothing was needed but agreement in faith and love, and that this, so far from being injured by differences in outward things, would only shine forth more clearly through these very differences, and he recognised the right of all Churches freely and independently to follow their ancient customs in such matters. Although Cyprian, as we have remarked above, considered the Romish Church as really the "cathedra Petri," and the representation of this outward unity of the Church, he was nevertheless far from deducing from these grounds that a right of decision, in controverted Church matters, belonged to this Church. On the contrary, he firmly and powerfully maintained the independence of individual bishops in the administration of their Churches after their own principles, and he carried through

[5] Tertullian, de Pudicitia, c. 1. "Audio, edictum esse propositum et quidem peremptorium: pontifex scilicet maximus, quod est episcopus episcoporum, edicit."

[6] Tertull. de Virgg. Velandis.

[7] The controversy, which we shall also have to treat of in another place, about the validity of baptism administered by heretics.

[8] Nihil innovetur, nisi quod traditum est. He gave out, "se successionem cathedram Petri habere." Cypr. Ep. lxxiv. lxxv.

what he acknowledged as right, even against the opposition of the Romish Church. In the beginning of the second of those controversies to which we have alluded, when he communicated the principles of the North African Church, which he well knew were at variance with the usage of the Romish, to Stephanus, the bishop of Rome, he wrote to him in the name of a synod, as a college, which considered itself quite equal in dignity and rights, would do to another; and he said, "We have communicated these things to you, dearest brother, in virtue of our common dignity and in sincere love, for we trust that, out of your own religion and faith, those things will be well pleasing to you which are agreeable to religion and truth. We are, however, aware that some men are unwilling to lay aside what they have once taken up, and are unwilling to change their principles, but that they retain some peculiarities of their own, without breaking the bond of peace and concord which binds them to their colleagues. In such matters we put no restraint on any man, nor do we lay down any law, since every president of a Church has the use of his free-will in the administration of his Church, for which he will hereafter have to give an account only to the Lord[g]."

After the violent declarations of the Romish bishop had been delivered, he proclaimed the same principle before an assembly of more than eighty bishops of Northern Africa, when he required of each of them to give his sentiments freely, for no one should make himself a bishop over the bishops. When Stephanus appealed to the authority of the ancient Romish tradition, and spoke against innovations; Cyprian said in reply[1], that it was far rather Stephanus, who made innovations, and fell away from the unity of the Church. "Whence, then, is that tradition? Is it deduced from the words of the Lord, and from the authority of the Gospels, or from the doctrine and the epistles of the apostles? Custom, which has crept in with some people, must not prevent truth from prevailing and triumphing, for custom without truth is nothing but inveterate [or antiquated] error."

[g] Pro communi honore et pro simplici dilectione. . . . . Qua in re nec nos vim cuiquam facimus aut legem damus, quando habeat in ecclesiæ administratione voluntatis suæ arbitrium liberum unusquisque præpositus, rationem actus sui Domino redditurus. Cyprian. Ep. lxxii.

[1] Ep. lxxiv. ad Pompej.

He very properly remarks, that it is by no means beneath the dignity of the Romish bishop, any more than of any other, to allow himself to be set right where he has gone wrong. "For the bishop must not only *teach*, but also *learn*, for he surely *teaches* best, who is daily learning something, and advancing by learning what is best." Firmilianus, the bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, in testifying his agreement with Cyprian, (Ep. lxxv.) expressed himself also very strongly against the unchristian conduct of Stephanus, when this latter forbade the Romish Church to receive the deputies of the North African Synod into their houses. He accuses him, while he boasts of being the successor of St. Peter, on whom the unity of the Church was built, of destroying the unity of the Church, by his uncharitable and ambitious conduct. He opposes the tradition of other old Churches as well as dogmatical arguments, to the tradition of the Romish Church, which had been brought forward, and in order to show that the Romans did not observe the apostolical traditions in all things, he observes that, in many Church matters, they departed from the customs of the Church of Jerusalem and other old apostolical Churches, but that men had not thought it worth while to disturb the unity and the peace of the Catholic Church on account of these differences [2].

Cyprian had already shown, on a former occasion of a different kind, how far he was from attributing a supreme authority in the Church to the bishop of Rome, and from supporting him in the exercise of it. Two Spanish bishops, Basilides and Martialis, had been deposed from their office by the synod, as *libellatici*, and on account of other faults, and they had themselves acknowledged the validity of the sentence. The provincial bishops, having convoked the Church over which Basilides had presided, had already chosen another in his place. But the two deposed bishops went to Stephanus, the bishop of Rome, and he, assuming to himself the authority of a superior court, reversed the sentence of the Spanish Church, and replaced both of them in their office; whether it was that he found the grounds of justification, which they alleged, satisfactory, or whether it was the custom at that time in the Romish Church, to take the part of those who appealed to it. A contest now arose in Spain, whether the first

[2] Eos autem qui Romæ sunt, non ea in omnibus observare, quæ sunt ab origine tradita, et frustra apostolorum auctoritatem prætendere.

sentence or the reversal should be valid, and an appeal was made to the North African Church, to ascertain their sentiments. The North African synod, at Carthage, in whose name Cyprian answered, had no hesitation in declaring the sentence of the Romish bishop invalid, and they strongly charged the Spanish synod not to continue the two unworthy bishops in their offices. Cyprian did not enter into the question whether the Romish bishop had any right to make such a judicial inquiry, but he declared without any further discussion that this unjust sentence, founded on insufficient grounds, was void. In Ep. lxviii. (Ep. lxvii. ed. Ox.) he writes thus :—"The regular ordination (of the successor of Basilides) cannot be rendered invalid, on the ground that Basilides, after the discovery and the avowal of his fault, went to Rome and deceived our colleague Stephanus, who lives at a distance, and is unacquainted with the true circumstances of the case, so that he, who had been deposed by a just sentence, was able to obtain an unjust sentence to reinstate him." Perhaps the mortified hierarchical ambition of Stephanus, in this event, although Cyprian spoke of him as yet with great tenderness, may have had some influence in exciting him to the stubborn part which he took in the second controversy, which we have just been mentioning.

II.—*Church Discipline.—Excommunication from the visible Church, and re-admission into it.*

The Divine Founder of the Church, whose penetrating glance could trace its progress through the succession of ages, by the significant parable in which He represented its condition (Matt. xiii.) had proclaimed, that it would consist, according to its earthly composition, of a mixture of true and false members, of such as, although united by the outward bond of the Church, were separated from one another by their inward dispositions, and in part belonged to the kingdom of God, in part to the ungodly world. He had before declared that this mixture should endure to the end of earthly things, and He reserved the public sifting and separation of this mass of men, so different in their dispositions from each other, to his final judgment alone. He had blamed that hasty and intemperate zeal of man, which, while it

would separate the tares and the good seed before the proper season comes, is apt to pull up the hidden seed of the wheat with the tares, for much which is but weeds at first, may become changed to good fruit in the bosom of the Church. Many who at first had been members only of this visible Church, being gradually attracted by its influence from outward to inward things, might be formed into members of the invisible Church; and the outward Church may and ought in this manner to be not only the revealer and representation of the kingdom of God, which she is constantly for her genuine members, but also an *instructress* to educate man for the kingdom of God. Now no human eye is in a condition to effect such a separation in real truth; every human eye may be deceived by appearances, to which the inward thoughts do not correspond. But according to our Lord's expression, (Matt. vii.) the good and the evil tree are necessarily distinguished by their fruits, but the inward condition of this fruit, the disposition from which the works proceed, and on which, as far as the moral worth of actions is concerned, every thing depends, often cannot be inquired into by a mere human judgment. All evil does not show itself by gross outbreaks of passions and desires, so as to strike the eye, and much may *appear* to be done in the name of Christ, with Christian intentions, to the honour of Christ, and *seem* to produce great temporary results for the furtherance of his kingdom, which did not truly proceed from the Spirit of Christ, and is not recognised by Him as the work of *His* Spirit, as He says, that many will appear to have wrought great deeds in his name, whom He will not acknowledge as belonging to Him. Matth. vii. 22.

Nevertheless, although no human judgment can fully separate the genuine members of the Church from those who are not so, yet even mere human judgment, if it would only have followed the rules of the Gospel, might have been in a condition to recognise as really evil *much* foreign matter, which had attached itself to the outward form of the Church, and showed itself in the open outbreaks of an unregenerated and ungodly heart, and then to eject it from the bosom of the visible Church. It belongs to the natural rights of every society, to exclude those who are untrue to its principles from the society, and hence this was one of the natural rights of *every Christian Church*. In regard to the exercise of this right, the Christian Church had only to follow the example of the Jewish, for there were already

in the Jewish synagogues formulæ for the exclusion of those who had departed from the principles of true religion, either in theory or practice, and there were besides regular gradations of this exclusion. Many difficulties and disadvantages, which rendered the exercise of this right more difficult in after times, when civil and ecclesiastical society had become more united, would perhaps have no existence while the Church remained one independent whole, entirely severed from the heathen state. In order to preserve the Church from the contagion of heathen immorality, to keep it as pure as possible in its inward parts, and to discountenance the notion, that a man might be a Christian, and yet continue in heathenish habits of sin; the Churches, from the beginning, renounced all communion with those who had violated their pledges to a God-devoted life, and their baptismal vow of renouncing the kingdom of evil and all its works, by any great and notorious sins, or whose conduct openly showed that they were strangers to the practical influence of Christianity, and that they had continued to live like unconverted men, in the service of sin, or having left it, had relapsed again into it. These men were to be shown, that under these circumstances, they would be necessarily excluded by their conduct, from the enjoyment of the rights and advantages which belonged to the Christians. By this exclusion of unworthy members from the society of Christians, the heathen would also be deprived of an opportunity of laying the crimes of individuals, who falsely called themselves Christians, to the charge of religion itself.

St. Paul, therefore, declared the Christian Churches not only justified in ejecting from their society those whose conduct rendered them clearly unworthy of the name of Christian brother, but absolutely bound to do so: 1 Cor. v. The Christians might eat with all the heathen, and live in any sort of intercourse with them; but they were to avoid entirely all dealings of every kind with those brethren who had fallen away from their religion, to shew them, in the most pointed manner, that they had renounced all brotherly communion with them. Tertullian, therefore, might say to the heathen, "Those who are no Christians, are improperly called so. Such men take no part in our congregations; they do not receive the communion with us; they are become your's again through their sins; for we have no intercourse, even with those, whom your cruelty has compelled to recant; and we should by far rather endure among us those who

have departed from the principles of our faith by compulsion, than those who have done so of their own accord. Moreover, you have no right to call those men Christians, who have never been recognized as such by the Christians, who are unable to dissemble themselves[1]."

But *the Church must also prove an instructress*, she must never give up the hope of recovering those who have fallen away! By this very exclusion from intercourse with the brethren, those persons, if they had still a single spark of faith within them, if they had ever received any wholesome impressions in their hearts, ought to be brought to a consciousness of their guilt, and awakened to a fruitful repentance. If there be any signs, as far as man can judge, of such a change in their life, then their brethren must offer them consolation, and receive them again into their communion. This was the arrangement of St. Paul. Many regulations were afterwards gradually made about the cases, in which excommunication was to take place, and on the kind of life which the excommunicated ought to lead, when they desired to be re-admitted to the communion of the Church; the proofs of repentance and penitence which they ought to give; the length of time which they ought to remain under excommunication: and all these things were arranged with due regard to the difference of the transgressions, and the different conduct manifested by the offenders. (Gefallenen. Lapsi.) That class of them who had been excommunicated for their offences, and by penitence, were earning for themselves at first re-admission into the Church, and admittance to the communion, were called the Pœnitentes. Tertullian says, (de Pœnitentia, c. ix.) "that they should express their contrition by their whole appearance, and with fasting" (which, in these early days, usually accompanied the special gathering up of the heart for prayer); "they should pray to God for the forgiveness of their sins, make confession of their sins before the Church, and begging all their Christian brethren to pray in their behalf, they should throw themselves at the feet of the presbyters, and the known friends of God[2]." Origen (in the third book of his work against Celsus, p. 147)[3] writes thus: "The Christians mourn for those who are carried away by lust

[1] Ad Nation. i. 5.

[2] [This is a loose translation of the original passage. I have followed the German.]

[3] [P. 143, ed. Spencer. H. J. R.]

or any other passion, as if they were dead; and when they have given proofs, for a long time, of their real change of sentiments, they receive them again for catechumens, just as they would receive men that rose from the dead." After their repentance had been proved genuine for a length of time, absolution and re-admission into the Church was imparted to them by the sign of peace and blessing, the laying on of hands by the bishop and the clergy.

The pastors of the Christian Church, who were animated by the spirit of vital Christianity, did not fail to point to the inward nature of Christian penitence, and to represent those outward acts of penance, as tokens of the inward feelings and sensations of the heart. "If a man condemns himself," says Tertullian, (de Pœnit. c. ix.) "God acquits him; so far as thou sparest not thyself, believe me, God will spare thee." They laid great stress on the difference between the absolution of the priests and the Divine forgiveness of sins, and they declared that absolution can only reach its proper end in regard to him on whom it is bestowed, when he is really fitted for the forgiveness of his sins by the feelings of his heart, which are open to God alone, who can look upon the inward man. Thus Firmilianus, the bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, in the latter half of the third century, speaks after this manner: "The bishops and presbyters meet every year with us, in order to take counsel together on matters of general interest, and to consult for the spiritual cure of our fallen brethren, by means of penitence: not as if they received from us the forgiveness of their sins, but that they may be brought to a consciousness of their sins by us, and compelled to make a more perfect satisfaction to the Lord." (Cyprian, Ep. lxxv.) Cyprian himself declares, (Ep. lii. ad Antonian. Ep. lv. ed. Ox.) "We do not prejudice God's jurisdiction in this matter, so that He should not be the ratifier of what we determine, if He find the penitence of the sinner true and perfect. But if any man has deceived us by a counterfeit repentance, then let God, who is not mocked, and can look upon the heart of man, decide on *that* in which we are unable to judge, and correct the sentence of his servants."

But even here, in this Church penitence, there was, in some degree, a mischievous taint of that confusion between outward and inward, which we have above remarked; of that confusion between the visible and the invisible Church, and of that false

representation of a New Testament priesthood, analogous to that of the Old. According to the pure evangelic view of this matter, it is an exclusion from the invisible Church alone that can prejudice the salvation of the sinner; and this, each man can only bring down upon himself by his own dispositions; and according to this view, there is only one means for him to obtain forgiveness of his sins, and admittance to the communion of the invisible Church—that is, penitence with faith, by which the sinner appropriates to himself what Christ hath done for the salvation of mankind. He who thus obtains communion with the Redeemer, is a member of the invisible Church, whether he be received into any visible Church or not. Every Christian for himself, every Christian, without any distinction, for others, can administer the priestly office, of announcing to himself or to his brother the forgiveness of sins, obtained for all mankind, and assured to them by the one eternal High Priest. This declaration can never properly be made, without the pre-supposed condition of a genuine repentance in faith. All must depend on this heartfelt penitence; all that is outward can have no meaning, except as a spontaneous fruit of that inward feeling, as a free declaration of that feeling, not dependent on any thing arbitrary whatever. These outward acts may be different, according to the difference of men's hearts, relations, and circumstances. The feelings of the heart will not bear to have it prescribed, in what uniform mode, and by what outward demeanour of a settled and prescribed character, they shall be shown outwardly.

But then, after that error had once taken deep root, men must have attributed a greater importance to excommunication from the visible Church, than they ought to do, when considered in itself, in a pure and evangelical point of view, because this visible Church appeared to them the only means by which they could enter into communion with the invisible. This fundamental error might easily lead men to confound the confession of their sins before the outward Church [1], which is no essential part of true penitence, the humiliation before an outward Church, before a visible priesthood, before men and creatures, an humiliation which cannot be prescribed fairly to any man—with an

[1] As in the following words of the confessors, in a letter to Cyprian, Ep. xxvi. (Ep. xxxi. ed. Ox.) where they bring forward, as a mark of true penitence, the "humilitas atque subjectio, quæ alienum de se expectat judicium, alienam de suo sustinet sententiam."

inward confession of sins before God, with an heartfelt humiliation before God, without which there can be no true penitence; it might easily induce men to confound acts of penitence required by an outward Church, acts which no human authority was justified in exacting as part of the Divine law, acts which might be done in hypocrisy, and in which, as an "opus operatum," that satisfied the law, men were apt to forget inward penitence; it might lead men, I say, to confound these acts with *that true inward penitence* of the heart, which is an indispensable condition of forgiveness of sins; and to confound likewise re-admission into the outward communion of the Church with a reception into the inward communion of the invisible Church; and lastly, the priestly absolution with the forgiveness of sins through God[5]. Absolution was, under this point of view, to be a peculiar act of the Judæo-Christian priesthood, which every Christian was not capable of performing, and it must have been looked upon as something more than the mere announcement of God's forgiveness of sin, which every Christian, as a preacher of the Gospel, was competent to make for himself and others. The spiritual power of the apostles, also, in this respect, would be conceived transferred to the bishops by means of ordination, and the power of binding and loosing committed to the apostles, was appealed to, although this promise of our Lord contained nothing to justify such an interpretation of it. It may be imagined that these words presupposed a gift bestowed by the power of the Spirit of God on the apostles,—a gift of looking into the hearts of men,—in virtue of which they were able to distinguish, in each individual case, the dispositions which made men fitted to receive the forgiveness of their sins, from those which excluded them from such a mercy; and therefore was it, that their[6] spiritual sentence of condemnation or acquittal, being founded on an infallible knowledge of men's hearts, by which they judged, must necessarily harmonize

[5] [This accusation has sometimes been made against the Church of England by those who will understand her forms of absolution in a sense which by far the greater part of her writers utterly disclaim, and a sense which in the form most assailed (the form in the visitation of the sick) is quite incompatible with the prayer which immediately follows it. Some of the usual misrepresentations on this subject are noticed in an article in the number of the British Critic for July, 1831, on Stratten's Book of the Priesthood.—H. J. R.]

[6] ["Ihr verdammender, oder freisprechender, *geistlicher* Richterspruch." Germ. "Geistlicher" is, perhaps, here to be taken in the sense of *ecclesiastical*. I therefore quote the original, that my readers may judge.—H. J. R.]

with the judicial sentence of God, who declared his judgment by them, as his organs, and it would therefore infallibly be ratified and rendered efficacious. And in this case the Montanists, and in some degree, Origen[7], would have had a full right to apply this promise, but to those only who had the same measure of illumination as the apostles. This would be a gift of a nature, of which we find some examples certainly among the apostles, as in the conduct of St. Peter towards Ananias and Sapphira; but then such a gift could only be required or serviceable for the *peculiar* calling of an apostle, and we cannot conclude from any passage in the New Testament, that such a gift should continue for ever in the Church, and least of all that a priesthood should be propagated in the Church as the possessors of such a gift. And yet, after all, we do not so much as once find that even the apostles ascribed to themselves any *abiding* gift, by which their judgment on men's hearts was to be preserved infallible in every case.

If we now compare particularly the context of this promise, in John xx. 21, and similar passages, where Christ proclaims the apostles his trust-worthy organs in the preaching of the Gospel; we shall be led to see nothing in the power of the keys, as regards the kingdom of heaven, than the power which lies of itself in the power of preaching the Gospel, the power of proclaiming remission of sins and admission into the kingdom of heaven to believers, in as far as they do believe, and of proclaiming condemnation and exclusion from the kingdom of God to the un-

[7] Origen, who had experienced in his own person the prejudicial effects of the ecclesiastical power of judgment, assumed by the bishops, contends against it, (T. xii. Matth.), and says, that this power, committed to St. Peter, could only be conceded to those who partook with St. Peter of all the "prædicates" contained in that passage, who alone enlightened like him by the Spirit of God, could pass an infallible sentence, through which God himself would judge. "But as for those who, in order to make themselves of consequence as bishops, made use of this passage and applied it to themselves, as to St. Peter, as if they had themselves received the keys of the kingdom of heaven from our Saviour; they must be told that they are quite right, *if they possess those things*, on account of which this was said to St. Peter —Him, who is not bound by the chain of his sins, neither God himself, nor he, that is St. Peter himself, can bind. But if a man be no St. Peter, and hath not that which is there named, he misunderstands the sentence of Scripture in his pride, and judges in his pride like Satan*."

[* The passage from which this is abridged occurs in Huet's edition, vol. i. p. 279, 280, in § xii. on Matth. H. J. R.]

believers, in as far as they exclude themselves by their guilty desires and dispositions from the only justifying and saving means, and from the only means of admission into that kingdom; for the Gospel, by its very nature, (2 Cor. ii. 14.) is a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, just as men make it by their own dispositions. And thus there will be found in that promise nothing more than what is competent to every Christian, who preaches the pure Gospel.

If men had made clearly the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church, and declared clearly, that absolution is nothing else than the announcement of the forgiveness of sins, which is bestowed by Christ under the condition of faith and repentance, then the controversy between the milder and the stricter party, as to penance, might have been more easily set at rest. All were agreed on the distinction between those sins, into which all Christians might fall, in consequence of the sinfulness of their nature which clings to them, and those which clearly shew, that he who commits them, is still living in the service of sin, as a constant habit, and that he is none of the redeemed nor regenerate, that he is no Christian, and is in the land of destruction—in short, the distinction between "peccata venialia" and "peccata mortalia," or "ad mortem." This distinction was found in the first Epistle of St. John; besides the denial of the faith, men reckoned as sins of the second class—deceit, theft, incontinence, adultery, &c. Now the principle of the milder party, which gradually obtained the upper hand, was this:—the Church must receive every fallen member, into whatever sins he may have fallen, she must hope for the forgiveness of the sins of all, under the condition of a sincere repentance, and, at least in the hour of death, the absolution and the communion must be given to all such as have shewn true penitence up to that time. The other party would never consent to the re-admission into Church communion of those who had violated their baptismal covenant by sins of this latter kind. They said:—these men have despised the forgiveness of sins which Christ obtained for them, and which was assured to them in baptism, no decree of God is *revealed* in regard to them, the Church is therefore in no case justified in proclaiming to them the forgiveness of their sins, and she must leave them in the hands of God. The one party would not suffer any limits to be put to the grace of God towards

repentant sinners; the other wished to uphold the holiness of God, and feared that men should make their brethren secure and easy in a sinful life, by a false reliance on the power of the absolution of the priest.

III.—*The History of Divisions in the Church, or Schisms.*

THE schismata, or what in stricter language are called *divisions* of the Church, must be carefully distinguished from what are properly called *heresies*. The former are such separations from the prevailing Church, as arise from certain outward occasions and circumstances, which relate to the constitution and discipline of the Church; the latter are such separations from it, as spring from differences and controversies on points of doctrine. While, therefore, what we have to say of the latter is intimately connected with the genetic development and progress of Christianity, as far as regards its doctrines, the representation of the former is in the closest connexion with the history of the constitution and discipline of the Church, and both illustrate each other mutually. In a dogmatical point of view, indeed, the history of the Church *divisions* is only important as serving to illustrate the progress of the doctrine about the Church, but then the development of *this* doctrine is completely interwoven with the history of the constitution of the Church, so that it seems the most suited to our purpose, to bring forward the history of schisms in connexion with the chapter which treats generally of the constitution of the Church.

In this period we have to record two remarkable divisions in the Church, both of which, *as well* in regard to *the time in which they arose*, as to the *Churches and persons* who bore part in them, are intimately connected together. In the history of both these divisions, the monarchical episcopal system is seen coming forth victorious from the struggle with presbyterianism: in both, Catholicism rises victorious over separatism, and both divisions tended to the establishment of the system of the unity of the Church. These divisions are those of Felicissimus and of Novatian, the former proceeding from the Church of Northern Africa, and the other from the Romish Church.

The former had its source, remote indeed, but lying deep, in the circumstances which accompanied the election of Cyprian to

the bishopric of Carthage: this person had been chosen by the voice of the Church; but a part of the clergy, from reasons with which we are unacquainted, and on which we can therefore pass no judgment, were discontented with this choice (perhaps because some one or other of the opponents of Cyprian had promised himself the episcopal office), and the chief persons at the head of this party were five presbyters[1]. Now these five presbyters continued their efforts, together with their supporters, to contend against the episcopal authority of Cyprian; and as the presbyters were still mindful of their former rights, and desirous to preserve their old influence on the government of the Church, it was impossible to avoid a contest between a bishop like Cyprian, a bishop who would act decidedly with strong views of the highest spiritual power, which he believed himself to possess by Divine right, and his antagonists in the college of presbyters.

It usually happens, where men, even those in whom a life proceeding from God has begun, but in whom the old man is not utterly destroyed, contend for their rights, instead of striving to excel in the execution of their duties in the spirit of charity and self-denial, that on both sides prejudice and passion make them look on wrong as if it were right: and this was the case here. But then, we are here deprived of the knowledge of all the circumstances necessary to enable us to decide and separate right from wrong on both sides, because we have only the partial account of one side of the question; and that too, an account which bears upon it, at times, plain marks of a passionate warmth.

An unprejudiced consideration will certainly not fail to recognise in Cyprian a disciple of Christ, a man animated by the spirit of love to the Redeemer and his Church. It is not to be denied that he was affected towards his flock, as a true pastor ought to be, that their advantage lay sincerely at his heart, and that he wished to exercise his episcopal office, so as to maintain discipline and order in his Church: but then, it is also certain, that he was not enough upon his guard against the fundamental evil of human nature, which is always ready to fix itself on some of

[1] We see this from the words of Pontius, where he speaks of the election of Cyprian: "Quidam illi restiterunt, etiam ut vinceret:" compared with the passage in Ep. xl. where he speaks of the machinations of the five presbyters: "Conjurationis suæ memores et antiqua illa contra episcopatum meum, imo contra suffragium vestrum et Dei judicium venena retinentes, instaurant veterem contra nos impugnationem suam." (Ep. xliii. ed. Ox.)

the best qualities in man, and by which these best qualities of man may be adulterated and corrupted,—an evil which is exactly the most dangerous to those who are furnished with the choicest gifts and powers for the service of the Lord, and is then most dangerous when it takes a spiritual form; it is certain that he was not sufficiently upon his guard against pride, with all its over-heated suggestions. That for which he struggled, the full power of the episcopacy, was exactly the rock on which his spiritual life made shipwreck; in the bishop "appointed by God himself, and acting in the name of Christ," he forgot the man, living in the flesh, and exposed to all the temptations to sin, which others undergo; in the bishop called to govern, and gifted with inviolable authority from God, he forgot the disciple of Christ, the tender-hearted and humble Christ, appearing in the *form of a servant, for the service* of his brethren. Had he always remained true to this spirit of discipleship to Christ, he would have been able, with more ease to himself, and more salutary fruits to the Church, to have conquered his enemies, than by all his insisting on the inalienable rights of episcopacy, and all his appeals to supernatural revelations, visions, and dreams, in which it might happen to him, to confound the self-delusions of prejudice and pride with the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. It was, for example, undoubtedly, a different spirit which allowed him to conceive the pretended heavenly voice to be a warning to his opponents, when it said: "He who believes not Christ, who appoints the priest, will hereafter be obliged to begin to believe Christ, who avenges the priest[2]." Well might Cyprian take to heart the reproof which a layman, who had joined the opposite party, gave him, by reminding him that "*the priests ought to be humble, for even Christ and his apostles were humble*[3]."

[2] See Ep. lxix. ad Florentium Pupianum. (Ep. lxvi. ed. Oxon.) In these cases his adversaries had a right to blame him for the "somnia ridicula et visiones ineptas," to which he was in the habit of appealing, although every thing of this sort need not have been the delusive reflexion of prejudice and pride. There may have been gifts of grace present to him, on which self-delusion fixed itself, because they served to nourish pride, instead of being used with humility.

[3] Cyprian, Ep. lxix. (Ep. lxvi. ed. Oxon.) This layman was Florentius Pupianus, probably a confessor, who joined himself to the party of Felicissimus. The letter of Cyprian to him is not calculated to contradict the accusation of a want of humility. Pupian had declared that he had a scruple in his heart about Cyprian, which must first be removed, before he could acknowledge Cyprian for his bishop in real sincerity (scrupulum sibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem inciderat). Instead of applying himself to investigate and remove what might be a subject of

These five presbyters, or at least some of them, were probably presidents of separate Churches in or near Carthage, and had indulged themselves, in defiance of a bishop whom they hated, in many independent proceedings in the management of Church affairs, or at least in such proceedings as Cyprian, who looked upon the matter from the episcopal point of view, might consider an infringement of the bishop's rights. One of them, by name Novatus, a man[4], it would seem, of restless and enterprising

reproach to Cyprian, in the opinion of this layman, who seems a well-intentioned person, although led astray by the hasty opponents of Cyprian, this latter appeals only, with episcopal pride, to the judgment-seat of God, who had appointed him bishop, and declaims against the iniquity of any man making himself a judge over the priest called to his office by God himself.

[4] This is all which we feel justified in saying of Novatus after an impartial investigation, as far as we can judge from the deficient and partial documents we possess. The accusations which Cyprian himself brings against him, (Ep. xlix. Ep. lii. ed. Ox.) would, we confess, if they are founded on fact, make him appear in a most unfavourable point of view; but these accusations bear completely the stamp of blind passion, which without investigating the matter competently, trusts deceitful rumours, and gives itself up to a most unjust mode of drawing conclusions. The usual mode of controversy was here employed: to attribute bad motives to the opposite party, and to assume these as certain, just as if man's inward heart had been laid open, without giving a single proof in support of these suppositions. According to this representation, Novatus was about to be called before an ecclesiastical tribunal on account of his offences; his conscience condemned him, and he was rejoiced at the outbreak of the Decian persecution, which stopped all proceedings against him, and in order to escape the sentence of condemnation, which awaited him after this was over, he set on foot all those disturbances of which we shall have to speak hereafter, and broke loose from the ruling Church. How well put together are all these accusations, but how improbable are they! During the Decian persecution, indeed, Cyprian himself acknowledges Novatus as a proper presbyter. Ep. v. [I believe the Letter here alluded to is Ep. vi. (ed. Ox. xiv.) in ed. Pamel.—H. J. R.]

In order to judge of the conduct of Novatus in these controversies, the following is an important inquiry: Whether he was one of the five presbyters who opposed Cyprian from the beginning? Mosheim has brought much to combat this supposition, and the most weighty of his arguments will be adduced below. We are unable here to decide with certainty upon this point; but still, the whole connexion of the history is in favour of an affirmative answer. In the Letter of Cyprian, Ep. v. we have just quoted, five presbyters write to Cyprian, in order to make a request to him. One of those here mentioned, namely Fortunatus, belonged to the five presbyters, according to Cyprian's own declaration, Ep. lv. [I believe this is Ep. lix. ed. Ox. v. p. 131.—H. J. R.] As Novatus was then with Fortunatus, it is highly probable that all the four presbyters, who here appear as one party, were no others than the old opposition party, the five presbyters, the Presbyterium Felicissimi. Also in the answer, by anticipation, which Cyprian returns to their request, we may perhaps discover a new source of irritation against the bishop. The comparison of what Cyprian says of the machinations of Novatus, Ep. xlix. (Ep. lii. ed. Ox.) with what he says of the machinations of the five presbyters, Ep. xl. (Ep. xliii. ed. Ox.) and

character, and one who rejected, with the strong spirit of freedom that belongs to the Church, the yoke of episcopal monarchy, but one who gave way too much to his passionate disposition, being the president of a congregation and Church on a hill at, or near to, Carthage, had without being first commissioned by the bishop, ordained one of his followers, by name Felicissimus, to be deacon of his Church [5]. This Felicissimus was one who was just calculated to become an enterprising partisan, and one who would possess an extensive influence among the congregation, from his personal connexions. Cyprian declares this an infringement of his episcopal rights; but Novatus, with his views, and according to his presbyterian system, might think himself qualified, as a presbyter and president of a Church, to perform this. Which was right and which was wrong, was here not so clearly made out at that time, when the struggle was undecided between the aristocratical and the monarchical principles of Church government. Cyprian allowed Felicissimus to remain in his office, whether it was out of deference to a strong party, or whether it was only afterwards that the hostile conduct of Felicissimus induced him to represent his ordination as irregular and invalid, and a violation of his episcopal rights. This anti-Cyprian party now sought an occasion of coming forward openly against the bishop, and it was offered to them on the breaking out of the persecution of Decius, which took place very shortly after these events.

We have before observed, that at the beginning of this persecution Cyprian had withdrawn himself for a time from his Church, but he had, as we then saw, good grounds to justify this step, and the very best justification of it was afforded by his martyrdom afterwards; but still it was a conduct on which, of course, a difference of opinion might exist. Cyprian's enemies were glad to look upon the thing in the worst light, and accused

also with what Pontius says of the old enemies of Cyprian, will bespeak the existence of only one anti-Cyprian party from the very beginning—a party which held together, and in which Novatus took a conspicuous part.

[5] See Cyprian, Ep. xlix. (Ep. lii. ed. Ox.) on Novatus: "Qui Felicissimum satellitem suum diaconum, nec permittente me nec sciente sua factione et ambitione, constituit." All this tends to show, that the naming Felicissimus to a deacon's office, preceded the division caused by Novatus; but in the absence of more circumstantial accounts of the matter, there is still considerable doubt on this point.

him of having been induced by cowardice to violate his duty as a pastor [6].

We must observe, besides, that this party of adversaries to Cyprian had many opportunities, from what happened during the persecution, to increase their own number, and to instigate men's minds against the bishop. As we have before observed in the history of this persecution, many were driven, by fear or force of the torture, to conduct which was considered as a denial of the faith, and involved an "ipso facto" excommunication. But most of them were afterwards disturbed by severe remorse for their guilt, and longed to return to the congregation of their brethren, and to partake with them of the Lord's Supper. An inquiry now arose; shall we instantly accede to their wishes, or shall we wholly reject their petition? or shall we devise a middle course, by opening to them a hope of re-admission into Church communion; but before it be granted in reality, try their conduct for a long season of time, and demand continued proofs of contrition at their hands? Shall we treat all these fallen brethren (lapsi) in the same manner, or shall we act differently by them, according to the difference of circumstances, and the difference of their offences? The Church was at that time without any general, recognised principles as to Church penitence in these respects; there was (see above) one party which would grant absolution to no man, under any conditions whatever, if he had once broken his baptismal covenant by a mortal sin (as the phrase went), and among these sins they reckoned every kind of denial of the faith and every relapse into heathenism. Cyprian [7], who used to con-

[6] We may perceive by the manner in which the Roman clergy spoke of this matter in their first Letter to the Church of Carthage, Ep. ii. (Ep. viii. ed. Ox.) that some person had been able to put it in a disadvantageous light before them, and that hence at Rome they were not inclined entirely to approve of the motives assigned by Cyprian; for they say, "in which he *may* have done well" (quod utique recte fecerit). Cyprian, in consequence of this, expresses a suspicion that this Letter, in which things so strange to him appeared, might be a counterfeit. Ep. iii. (Ep. ix. ed. Ox.) Afterwards, when he learnt that his opponents had represented his conduct in an unfavourable light at Rome, he thought it necessary to justify himself by a proper explanation of the whole course of the business, and he writes thus to the Roman clergy: "Quoniam comperi, minus simpliciter et minus fideliter vobis renuntiari, quæ hic a nobis et gesta sunt et geruntur." Ep. xiv. (Ep. xx. ed. Ox.)

[7] According to Jerome, de V. I. when he asked for Tertullian's books, he used to say to his secretary, "Da magistrum."

sider Tertullian as especially his teacher, might perhaps, from the study of his writings, have received a bias towards the principles of the stricter party, in respect to penitence. Many passages in those of his books which were written before the Decian persecution, lead us to conclude, that he had formerly been an advocate of the principle, that no man, who had committed a mortal sin, should receive absolution. As for instance, when he says[8], "These are the words of the Lord, in warning: 'See! thou art become whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing befal thee!' He gives the rule of life after he has bestowed soundness, and he does not allow men afterwards to run about unbridled; but rather, as the man is bound to serve Him for having been cured by Him, He threatens him the more severely, because the guilt is less if a man sins before he knows the doctrine of the Lord; but *there is no more forgiveness for sins when a man sins after he has begun to know the Lord*[9]". It may be alleged, that Cyprian *here* only wished to mark strongly the *greater* guilt of a sin committed by a *Christian*, and that this passage is only to be understood relatively; but certainly more is intended in one of the positions laid down in his collection of Biblical Testimonies:[1] "That to those who have sinned against God, no forgiveness can be imparted by the Church[2]". And from the passages[3] which are there quoted from Scripture, we see that by sin against God he understood nothing but a falling away from Christianity, which is a very unsuitable description of such transgressions, as if every sin were not a sin against God, and a falling away from God! but Cyprian judged more properly in this respect afterwards, as we shall see in the course of our history.

But, although Cyprian was an advocate of *this* principle, when he first entered upon his episcopal office, yet now the great number of the fallen brethren, who asked for absolution, and some of them with the bitterest tears of repentance, must, in some degree, have shaken him as a man of tender and fatherly feelings towards his Church. Were all these,—some of whom had only

[8] De habitu Virginum.

[9] *Nulla venia* ultra delinquere, postquam Deum nosse cœpisti.

[1] De Testimoniis, lib. iii. c. 28.

[2] Non posse in ecclesia remitti ei, qui in Deum deliquit.

[3] The same passages which Cyprian introduces in the epistle to the clergy of Carthage, Ep. ix. (Ep. xvi. ed. Ox.) on the subject of denial of the faith under persecution. So also in Ep. xi. (Ep. xvii. ed. Ox.) we find the contrast: "Minora delicta, quæ non in Deum committuntur."

sinned from want of knowledge, and others had only yielded to the flesh under the severity of torture,—were all these to remain for ever excluded from the blessed communion of their brethren; that is, according to Cyprian's mode of view, from the Church, in which alone is the road to heaven? The paternal feelings of the bishop struggled against such a resolution; but he dared not here to act on his own responsibility. In this state of indecision, he gave it as his opinion, that they should receive the fallen brethren, and exhort them to penitence; but that the decision on their fate should be postponed till the time when, after the restoration of tranquillity, the bishops, clergy, and Churches, might unite in some general principle on this matter, which so materially affected all Christians, by means of some general and considerate deliberation, after a due examination of the thing in all its bearings. It was also to be remembered, that there was a great difference between the offences of these fallen brethren, some of whom had run to the altars of the gods without making the smallest resistance, only to avoid sacrificing any thing earthly, while others had only failed out of pure ignorance, or by the weakness of the conquered flesh; and the unquiet of the times of persecution precluded any accurate discrimination between the offences and the moral state of individuals,—and yet, in order to a proper judgment on the part of the clergy, regard must be had to these points particularly. And then, too, the fallen brethren themselves were to make themselves worthy of re-admission into Church communion, by active proofs of repentance, which the persecution itself gave them the best means of doing. "He who cannot bear delay," says Cyprian, "may obtain for himself the martyr's crown." Under these impressions it was that he acted, in comforting all the fallen brethren, who desired absolution, by directing their thoughts to the end of the persecution, when their circumstances should be inquired into. But some of the clergy, and, as Cyprian afterwards learned, his old adversaries, took up these men, strengthened them in their demands, instead of exhorting them to submit quietly to the bishop's decision, and made use of this opportunity to excite the schism in the Church, which they were anxious to see.

If these fallen brethren had only been supported in their impetuous demands by the presbyters opposed to Cyprian, without finding any other support, their opposition against the bishop's measures would have had less weight. They found means, how-

ever, to win over to their cause a voice which then had very great influence among the Christians, the voice of those "Witnesses of the Faith," who had made confession of their faith under torture, or who went to meet a martyr's death after making confession. It was altogether in the character and spirit of Christian martyrs, to make their last legacy *a legacy of love*, to speak with their latest breath *words of love* to their brethren; it was quite consonant to their spirit, that those who were about to enter into glory after a firm and victorious struggle, should show a sympathy with their weaker brethren, who had yielded in the fight; and, lastly, should commend these fallen brethren to the benevolent acceptance of the Church. And it was just also, that the word of these witnesses of the faith should be held in especial esteem, if men would only remember, that they also were sinful men, needing, like all others, the forgiveness of their own sins, and that they, as long as they were in the flesh, had still to struggle constantly with the flesh; and if these witnesses would themselves also remember this; and if they would avoid being blinded by the excessive honour paid to them, and so being given up still more to the power of the hidden enemy, against whom they had still to fight as sinful men, and if they would take care not to use the momentary victory, which they had won through the grace of God, to the nourishment of a spiritual pride. Many yielded to this temptation; they granted the peace of the Church, to those who asked it of them, in an imperative manner, and acted as if there needed nothing but their voice for the absolution of the fallen brethren. The clergy, who ought to have set them right, in consequence of Cyprian's exhortation, and to have led them to humility, only strengthened them still more in their notions, and used them as instruments to further their own machinations against the bishop. They put the bishop very often in no small embarrassment by their imperative, and often very indefinitely expressed, declarations. Such, for example, was the following: "Let this or that person be received into Church communion, *together with those that belong to him*[4]:" an expression which allows of such various and inde-

[4] "Communicet ille cum suis." According to Cyprian, Ep. xiv. (Ep. xx. ed. Ox.) thousands of these "libelli pacis" were set forth every day by the confessors without examination. In the end of the second century, Tertullian speaks of this custom as of an ancient one. "Pacem in ecclesia non habentes, a martyribus in carcere exorare consueverunt." Ad Martyr. c. i. As a Montanist, he speaks

finite explanations and applications! Those who applied these indefinite expressions to themselves, were very proud in the notion, that the confessors or the martyrs had given them absolution, and they would hear of no delay, and suffer no trial of their conduct to take place. The less they showed proper contrition and humility, the less Cyprian was inclined to accede to their impetuous demands, and hence he was easily held up to odium as an enemy to the honour due to the heroes of the faith.

He was fulfilling his duty as a pastor, when he powerfully and firmly opposed the exaggerated reverence paid to those witnesses of the faith, (which was likely to become the source of much superstition,) as well as the false confidence on their decision, which seduced men into security while in a life of sin. He pointed out to the confessors, that a true confession cannot be an "opus operatum," but that it must consist in the whole course of their conduct. [Ep. xiii. ed. Ox.] "The tongue which has confessed Christ, must be maintained pure and undefiled in its dignity; for he who speaks that which conduces to peace, that which is good and right, according to the command of the Lord, confesses Christ daily." When he warns them against false security and against pride, he writes thus to them. (Ep. vi.) "Ye must lay it much to heart that what ye have happily begun, may be perfected in you. It is but little to be able to *obtain some advantage*, it is more to *keep* what one has gained. The Lord taught us this, when He said: 'See! thou art now whole! henceforth sin no more, lest a worse thing befal thee!' So also think thou, that He says to a confessor: 'See! thou hast become a confessor! sin no more, lest a worse thing befal thee!' Solomon, indeed, and Saul, and many others, were able, as long as they walked in the way of the Lord, to keep the grace bestowed upon them. As soon as the Lord's discipline was away from them, his grace went away also. . . . . I hear that some are swelling with pride; and yet it is written: 'Be not proud, but fear.' (Rom. xi. 20[5].) Our Lord was brought as a

violently against the misuse, which took place in this matter, and he hints that many were confirmed in their sins, by means of the "libelli pacis" granted to them inconsiderately by the confessors. De Pudicitia, c. xxii. The council of Elvira expresses itself thus against the abuses, which were caused by these letters of recommendation of the confessors, whether real or counterfeit: "quod omnes sub hac nominis gloria passim concutiunt simplices." Can. xxv.

[5] [St. Paul's expression is μη ὑψηλοφρονει, which Cyprian has made into "Noli altum sapere." H. J. R.]

lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so He opened not his mouth. . . . . And shall then any one, who lives through Him and in Him, dare to be proud and high-minded, unmindful alike of the conduct which He pursued, and of the commands which He laid on us, either by his own mouth or by the apostles? The servant is not greater than his master; let then those who follow the Lord, be humble, quiet, and silent, and so walk in his footsteps; the lower each man makes himself, the higher will he become[6]!"

When a certain Lucian, a confessor, "in the name of Paul, a martyr," in compliance with whose last commands he pretended to be acting, bestowed the peace of the Church on the fallen brethren, and gave them what were called certificates of communion (libellos pacis), Cyprian would not allow these to be valid, but said on the contrary, "Although the Lord has declared, that the nations must be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and receive forgiveness of their sins; yet this man, forgetful of the law of God, preaches peace and forgiveness of sins in the name of Paul. . . . . He remembers not, that the martyrs do not make the Gospel, but the Gospel the martyrs." Ep. xxii. [Ep. xxviii. ed. Ox.] He also made the same declaration expressly, in the discourse[7] which we have quoted above, after his return to the Church: "Let no man deceive himself; the Lord alone can show mercy. He alone can grant pardon to sins which are committed against himself, who bare our sins, who suffered for us, whom God gave up for our sins. Man cannot be greater than God; nor can the servant forgive the sins committed against his master; lest a new crime be added to the guilt of the fallen brethren, because they know not that which is written: 'Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man.' Jerem. xvii. 5. We must pray to the Lord; the Lord must be appeased for our satisfaction, who declares that He will deny those who deny Him, who alone has received all judgment from the Father. . . . . Do the martyrs give any commands? It is well, if what they command be lawful and just. . . . . Do the martyrs give any commands? That which they command ought to be what is written in the law of God; we must know beforehand that they have

[6] [This passage is taken with some abridgment from Cyprian. Ep. xiii. ed. Ox. H. J. R.]

[7] Sermo de Lapsis.

obtained, at the hands of God, what they desire; and then we are to do what they command, but not before; for it does not follow as a matter of course, that the Divine Majesty has granted whatever human promises have declared. . . . . Thus either the martyrs are nothing, if the Gospel can be annulled, or they who are martyrs by the Gospel, can have no power against that Gospel. [Let none of you, my beloved brethren, tarnish the fame of the martyrs; let none destroy their glories and their crowns. The strength of uncorrupted faith remains unimpaired;] nor *can he speak or do any thing against Christ, whose hope and faith, whose virtue and glory are all in Christ*[8]".

And yet Cyprian was not firm and consistent enough in the opposition which he made to the extravagant honour paid to the martyrs; and he himself was in some degree carried away by the spirit that prevailed among the multitude, which he ought to have conquered and guided by the spirit of the Gospel. The heat of the summer in the climate of Africa producing many sicknesses, he yielded so far as to give absolution to those among the fallen brethren, who desired the communion in sickness and in the fear of death, and supported their claim to it by *one of the certificates of peace* (libelli pacis) *conferred upon them by a witness to the faith*[9]. In his report to the Roman Church he gave, as his grounds for this conduct, that he wished, by means of this compliance, in some degree to assuage the violence of the multitude, and thus to counteract the machinations of those who were at the bottom of the mischief, and to remove from his own character the imputation of having refused the due and becoming share of honour to the martyrs[1].

We see from this how injurious any compromise with a prevailing prejudice, any halfway defence of truth, must always be, whether it proceed from a want of independence and firmness in our own opinions, or from fear of man and a false policy. If, on the one hand, Cyprian combated the false confidence in the intercession of the martyrs by the weapons of truth, he supported it,

[8] [I have taken the liberty of supplying one lacuna from the original of Cyprian, and inclosed it in a parenthesis, p. 130.—H. J. R.]

[9] Ep. xii. xiii. xiv. (Ep. xviii. xix. xx. ed. Ox.)

[1] Ep. xiv. (Ep. xx. ed. Ox.) "Ad illorum violentiam interim quoquo genere mitigandam ——, cum videretur et honor martyribus habendus, et eorum, qui omnia turbare cupiebant, impetus comprimendus." Of the other lapsi, on the contrary, he speaks thus, Ep. xiii. (xix.) "Qui nullo libello a martyribus accepto invidiam faciunt;" and this "invidia" or "odium" he was therefore afraid of.

on the other, by yielding; for it is evident that the recommendation of the martyrs must have had a peculiar force and meaning, as soon as all the fallen brethren in a like condition and in the same moral state were not treated alike, but only those who had this recommendation were to receive the peace of the Church and the communion at the hour of death, solely *on account of this recommendation;* while it was still highly probable that many, who had sought no support from this one means, had nevertheless distinguished themselves by repentance and penance more than those who had received this support. Now this conclusion, to which his conduct would give a very fair handle, is favoured by the language which he made use of in granting this permission, "to those who might be assisted in regard to their sins in the eyes of God by the help of the martyrs[2]," instead of pointing the attention of all, without distinction, to reliance only on one Mediator, and of blaming most unreservedly the fanciful self-confidence of those, who believed that they had really gained something of consequence by means of the human mediation, of which they had been assured. This inconsistency was exactly the thing to lay him open to his enemies in a manner which they well knew how to use.

Another circumstance, which would of course serve to give greater weight to the opposition party in its connexion with the fallen brethren, was the powerful voice of the Church of Rome, which had declared itself in favour of the milder principle, not in the case of all the fallen, but of those who had become sick afterwards. Cyprian declared also, that regard for the Roman Church, with which he was always unwilling to have any differences, had partly moved him to this compliance[3]. But this Church had acted more in the spirit of evangelic truth, because she directed the fallen brethren to the one only Mediator, and allowed of no distinction among them except that of repentant and unrepentant. In that first letter addressed to the clergy of Carthage, she had declared in regard to the fallen brethren, Ep. ii. (Ep. viii. ed. Ox.) "We have separated them from us, yet we have not left them to themselves, but we have exhorted them, and do exhort them, to be penitent, if they may thus be

[2] Auxilio eorum adjuvari apud Dominum in delictis suis possunt.

[3] Ep. xiv. (Ep. xx. ed. Ox.) to the Roman clergy: "Standum putavi et cum vestra sententia, ne actus noster, qui adunatus esse et consentire circa omnia debet, in aliquo discreparet."

able to receive *pardon from Him, who alone can bestow it:* that they may not, being deserted by us, become worse. . . . . If, therefore, any who have fallen into this temptation are seized with sickness, show repentance, and desire the communion, they must be assisted."

And yet, by Christian prudence in the rest of his conduct, by uniting mildness with earnestness, by instructions and by friendly, fatherly representations, by which he won the better spirits among the confessors, by the firmness with which he opposed the obstinate resistance of the presbyters, by the love and the respect with which the greater part of the community viewed him, bishop Cyprian appeared already to have restored tranquillity to Carthage, and he was enjoying the hope of returning, as soon as the Decian persecution ceased, to the Church, from which he had unwillingly been absent a whole year, and of celebrating with them the feast of Easter, A.D. 251. But before this hope could be realized, he had to learn that the machinations of the party had been of a deeper nature, and that they were too closely bound together to allow of their being separated so easily. The fire which was smouldering in secret, only wanted an opportunity to break out openly. Cyprian afforded them this opportunity, by the exercise of his episcopal power in a matter of considerable importance.

He despatched, it seems, before he returned to his Church, two bishops and two presbyters, as his deputies, with full powers to hold a visitation: they were to assign to the poor, who from age or sickness were unable to do any thing for their own support, so much out of the Church chest, as might be necessary for the supply of their bodily necessities; they were to give whatever might be needful to those who, though they had an employment, were unable to earn a livelihood by it, or who wanted money in order to enable them to buy the tools and materials necessary to carry on their trade, or who, having been ruined in their business by the persecution, were inclined to begin it again; and lastly, they were to prepare a description of all the poor to be maintained by the Church chest, distinguishing their ages, circumstances, and conduct during the persecution, in order that the bishop, whose business it was to learn to know all of them accurately, might promote the worthy ones, and what was here particularly designed, the tender and humble-minded, to such offices in the Church as they were capable of filling. The latter regula-

tion had this advantage, that the powers of these persons would be suitably employed for the service of the Church, that they would also receive a proportionate degree of care, and at the same time a burden would be removed from the Church chest. The qualities, which were particularly to be attended to, *mildness and humility*, were peculiarly requisite, during this time of ferment and unquiet in the Church, for those who were to enter its service, that thus the peace of the Church might be restored on a safe foundation, and the seeds of dissension choked. The presbyterian opposition party might not concede to the *bishop* the right of undertaking such a visitation, and making such a distribution of the Church chest of his own power, without calling together the whole college of presbyters, or at least they might object to such a right being exercised by Cyprian, on the ground that they did not any longer acknowledge *him* as their bishop; but it would have been utterly *against* their plan to allow him to carry through such an act of episcopal Church government, by which his own authority would be confirmed in the Church, and the Church would be united more closely with him, and thus his party would gain a considerable accession of strength. The deacon Felicissimus, who might very well possess considerable influence over some part of the Church in his capacity of deacon, (for the deacons appear to have had greater power in the North African Church, as well as in its cognate Church[4], the Spanish, than elsewhere,) who was, also, from some circumstances which we do not know very accurately, a very influential organ of that party, and perhaps particularly so in consequence of having the administration of part of the Church chest[5] under his care,—this deacon thought that he was justified in speaking a word or two, in a matter which concerned the application of Church funds;—

[4] Concil. Illiberit. c. lxxvii. "Diaconus regens plebem."

[5] We may learn from Ep. xlix. (Ep. lii. ed. Ox.) of Cyprian, that in the North African Church, the deacons had to keep and administer the funds of the Church chest. The accusations made against Felicissimus of "fraudes" and "rapinæ," Ep. lv. (Ep. lix. ed. Ox.) "pecuniæ commissæ sibi fraudator," relate to this point. There were similar accusations against Novatus, the presbyter and president of the Church, to which Felicissimus was appointed deacon. Cyprian was, however, an enemy to both of these men, and we must not take these accusations from his mouth, as the evidence of an unimpeachable witness. An independent application of part of the Church funds, which were deposited in this Daughter Church, in which, according to their views, they might believe themselves justified by their relations to the bishop, an application of these funds perhaps directed by party spirit, and par-

he used all his persuasion, all his influence and power, to excite a determined spirit of opposition to this episcopal ordinance; he declared in particular to the poor, who belonged to the Church of Novatus, in which he was appointed deacon, that he would soon contrive to satisfy all their wants; and he threatened them, that if they appeared before the episcopal commissioners, he would never afterwards admit them to the communion of the Church [6]. This Church became now the assembling place of all the fallen brethren, who would not wait with patience till the time for the decision of the whole matter; here they were all received into Church communion without any preparatory steps,

tial views, would probably be represented by Cyprian as an unfaithfulness in their duty. At all events, we are too destitute of unprejudiced accounts, to be able to decide with any thing like certainty on the subject.

[It appears * from the following passage of Origen, Commentar. in Matth. f. 443. that the deacons had to attend to the distribution of the Church funds: οἱ δε μη καλως διακονοι διοικουντες τα της ἐκκλησιας χρηματα, ἀλλ' ἀει μεν ταυτα ψηλαφωντες, οὐ καλως δε αὐτα οἰκονομουντες, ἀλλα σωρευοντες τον νομιζομενον πλουτον και χρηματα, ἱνα πλουτωσιν ἀπο των εἰς λογον πτωχων διδομενων. κ. τ. λ.]

[6] Every thing here depends on what is the genuine reading and the proper explanation of the difficult words in Cyprian: Ep. xxxviii. (Ep. xli. ed. Ox.) whether we should read "comminatus, quod secum in morte," or "in monte non communicarent, qui nobis obtemperare voluissent." According to the reading "in morte" two explanations may be offered: the one by referring the words "in morte," to Felicissimus, and then the sense would be, that he himself, even in his dying hour, would never recognise them as Christian brethren, that he would excommunicate them, and never be reconciled to them. We do not, however, in this case, see very well, why such a threat should be so very dreadful to the Christians of Carthage. Again, if we refer the words "in morte" to the subject contained in the verb "communicarent," which certainly comes nearer to the run of the whole passage, then the sense will be this:—that they should never, even in their dying hours, be received into Church communion by him; that is to say, they should never receive the communion from him as deacon, an office in which it was his business to bring the consecrated sacrament to those who were sick. This last explanation makes good sense, if we bear in mind that Felicissimus was deacon of one particular parish Church, and had a good understanding with Novatus the pastor of that Church, so that he would have the power of refusing the communion to those who dwelt in this part of the Church diocese. An entirely similar sense will result from the reading "in monte." We must then suppose that the Church, to which Novatus and Felicissimus belonged, was situated on an eminence in or near Carthage (in monte), and in this case we should be reminded of the Donatists at Rome, who were called Montenses, from holding their congregations on a hill. Felicissimus threatened to exclude all those, who chose to obey Cyprian, from communion in this Church.

* [This addition to the note is incorporated from the addenda in vol. iii.—H. J. R.]

and here, therefore, was a rallying point for all discontented spirits, which could not fail to have the most prejudicial consequences in regard to the discipline and order of the Church.

Cyprian was induced, by these troubles, to delay his return to Carthage till after Easter, A.D. 251, until he could reckon on meeting with his North African colleagues, for the purpose of holding the yearly synod, and thus find a support in them against the obstinacy of his opponents, and be able to unite himself with them, under the circumstances of the present controversy, after mature consideration, in some firm and consistent line of conduct, based on general principles. This Council of the North African Church decided on a middle plan between the extravagant harshness of denying all hope to the fallen brethren, and the opposite extreme of weak compliance; so that they might uphold Christian discipline, and yet not drive the fallen brethren to despair, by refusing them unconditionally, and for ever, absolution and readmission into Church communion, in such wise as to bring them, perhaps, at last, to give themselves wholly up to their vices, or relapse into heathenism. First, the different nature[7] of their offences was to be well weighed, and the communion was to be administered to all, even the "sacrificati" (those who had sacrificed to the heathen idols), if they showed repentance in their conduct, at least in any case of mortal sickness. If these persons afterwards recovered, they were not to be curtailed of the benefit bestowed upon them by the grace of God, but were to continue in the communion of the Church[8]. When the persecution broke out again with increased violence, a relaxation of this rule was voluntarily made, which was prompted by the spirit of Christian love and wisdom, which was this—the communion was to be administered to all who had shown proofs of repentance in their conduct, in order that they might not go into the struggle unarmed, but strengthened by communion with the body of the Lord[9]. But those who, while they had shown no single mark of repentance in their whole behaviour, first expressed their wish for the communion of the Church on the bed of sickness, were not then to receive the communion, because it was not sorrow for their sins, but the warning of death hanging over them, which induced this wish; and *he*

[7] The different guilt of the "sacrificati," according to the different modes in which they had been brought to recant, and of the "libellatici."

[8] Cyprian, Ep. lii. (Ep. lv. ed. Ox.)

[9] Ep. liv. (Ep. lvi. ed. Ox.)

deserves no consolation in death, who does not think of death before it is close at hand. In this exposition, the truly Christian endeavour is decidedly made, to call men's attention to the essentials of a true repentance, and to warn them against a false reliance on the "opus operatum" of absolution and the communion[1]. But yet, in many cases, nevertheless, a true repentance may be produced by the near approach of death, which He alone, who can look into the inward heart, can distinguish from a hypocritical penitence, which is so much more common; and therefore, they might well have avoided this harshness, without giving any room for false security, if they would only have explained, more justly and clearly, the real nature of absolution (see above). In this Church synod, a sentence of condemnation was also pronounced against the party of Felicissimus, and Cyprian was thus able, by his connexion with the North African bishops, to crush this division. But the party did not immediately give up their opposition; they endeavoured to spread themselves more widely in this part of the Church; and several individual African bishops, who were at variance with their colleagues, or had been deprived for their bad conduct, joined them. They elected Fortunatus, one of the five rebellious presbyters, to the bishopric of Carthage, in the place of Cyprian. They sent deputies to Rome to win over this chief Church [Hauptkirche] of the west to their side, and they obtained there a hearing for their accusations against Cyprian; but they were unable to dissolve the bond of union between him and Cornelius, the bishop of Rome, although their outcry had caused a momentary impression. So, in a letter, in which the spirit of the episcopal theocracy, a Jewish, rather than an evangelical notion, which is, in fact, the fancy of an Old Testament priesthood in the Christian Church, is very prominently displayed, Cyprian urges it on the Romish bishop, that he should defend the unity of the Church, founded on the mutual connexion of the bishops, against schismatics; and in the same letter he also zealously advocates the independence of bishops in their dioceses: "for since it is agreed upon by all of us," he writes, "that it is just and right, that each man's cause should be tried in the place in which the offence was committed, and since to every pastor *a portion of the flock* is assigned *for him to govern*, and *render up hereafter an account to the Lord of his*

[1] Ep. lii. (lv. ed. Ox.)

government; those who are under our jurisdiction ought not to run about, and, by their delusive arts and boldness, destroy the unity of the bishops, who are united together; but they ought to plead their cause there, where they can have also accusers and witnesses of their offence[2]."

The second schism arose in the Church of Rome; and as Cornelius of Rome co-operated with Cyprian of Carthage, to quash the first, so in this, Cyprian joined with Cornelius to maintain the unity of the Church. Like the former, this second dissension arose from a contest about the election of a bishop, and from a contention of opposite opinions on the subject of Church penance; only with this difference, that there the schism was set on foot by the laxer, and here by the stricter party. Much which had taken place during the Decian persecution, gave the outward occasion to the outbreak of this schism, as it had done with the other. We have before observed, that the prevailing tendency in the Roman Church, on the subject of penance, was to the milder doctrine; but still, it had also a stricter party, at the head of which was Novatianus, who had made himself known as a theological writer. We are without accurate accounts of the character of this man, from which we could obtain sufficient light to enable us to judge properly of his notions on this point, and his whole conduct in this matter, when considered with relation to his individual disposition: for what his angry enemies have said of him, and what completely bears upon it the mark of passion and exaggeration, naturally deserves no credit. If we endeavour to eliminate the real facts from the disfiguring and spiteful representations made by the enemies of Novatian, the following seems to be the most probable statement of the case: Novatian, in consequence of mental struggles, which proceeded from the earnestness of his disposition, had fallen into a sort of nervous disease or phantasy; such a condition, in short, as was then considered a case of demoniacal possession. Having probably beforehand, by his inward struggles, been prepared to believe in the divinity of Christ, and the Divine nature of Christianity, he had to thank the prayers of an exorcist for a temporary relief from his calamity. From this powerful convulsion of his whole nature, he fell into a severe illness, from which, in the first instance, his real and radical cure proceeded. In this

[2] Ep. lv. ad Cornel. (Ep. lix. ed. Ox.)

sickness his faith was decided, and when he thought himself near his end, he was baptized on his sick-bed. In Christianity he found peace and tranquillity, and a healing power. As he distinguished himself by his firmness in the faith, by the clearness of his Christian knowledge, to which his writings bear witness, by a happy power of teaching, and by a zeal for holiness, which afterwards led him to an ascetic life, bishop Fabian ordained him presbyter, overlooking the circumstance that he had first made known his faith, and been baptized, on the bed of sickness. The clergy of Rome were, from the first, discontented with this proceeding, because they maintained firmly *the letter* of the law of the Church, which was, that no man, who was baptized on the bed of sickness no "clinicus," should be ordained; but Fabian judged more wisely, according to the spirit of this law, the only intention of which was, to keep out of the clerical profession all those who, without real repentance, persuasion, and knowledge, had been induced to be baptized by the temporary agitation caused by the fear of death. In Novatian, the necessity for such a precaution was contradicted by his subsequent conduct. For a considerable time, he exchanged the active life of a practical member of the clergy, for the still, retired life of an ascetic; yet, nevertheless, he afterwards suffered himself to be induced to return to the active duties of his office, but perhaps not until they wished to put him at the head of a party[3].

[3] We must here take particular notice of the synodal letter of Cornelius, bishop of Rome, to Fabius, bishop of Antioch, of which Eusebius (vi. 43.) has preserved a fragment. This letter is well worthy of attention, as characteristic of that tendency of the churchly spirit to confuse the outward and the inward, which began to prevail so strikingly at Rome from early times. It is made a matter of reproach to Novatian, that the healing of the so-called demoniacal possession (see above) by the exorcists of the Roman Church, was the first cause of his believing. Whether this be true or not, it cannot bring a taint on Novatian's Christianity in any case. It was indifferent through what channel he was led to Christianity, provided that, when he had once become a Christian, he attained a living faith, a genuine Christian disposition, and a pure Christian knowledge. This reproach of Cornelius, that Satan had been the occasion of Novatian's faith (ᾧ γε ἀφορμη του πιστευσαι γεγονεν ὁ σατανας) was as foolish as it was unworthy of a Christian; just as if the workings of evil must not often serve as the foundation of the kingdom of God. 'After the cure of this demoniacal possession, he fell into a severe sickness,' (which may be explained naturally enough; the crisis in his whole organic frame, to which he may attribute the cure of his state of phantasy, being the cause of the sickness,) 'and, being in danger of death, he received the rite of baptism only by sprinkling, as his condition required,' (the baptismus clinicorum—not the baptism by immersion, as then usually practised,) 'if one can properly say, that such an one as he was really baptized.' (How

Some slight intimations of Cyprian's by no means amount to a proof, that Novatian, before his conversion, had been a Stoic philosopher, and that in some degree the spirit of the Stoic morality, mingling itself with his Christianity, had produced the sternness of his notions in these things. As his principles are so clearly to be explained from the sternness of his Christian character, and as he was acting in this instance in the spirit of a whole party of the Church, existing at that time, there is the

carnally and grossly does the prejudice of passion and the narrow-hearted spirit of the Romish hierarchy here make the bishop speak.) 'After this he received none of those things, which the Church requires to be received, and he was not confirmed by the bishop; and how, therefore, could he thus expect to receive the Holy Spirit!' A bishop of Rome, apparently Fabian, afterwards ordained him presbyter, although the rest of the clergy would not allow the ordination of a person baptized by sprinkling to be valid. The bishop here must have wished to make an exception—apparently a person of a more free and evangelic spirit who acted quite rightly in accordance with the spirit, if not the letter, of that ecclesiastical law against the ordination of persons so baptized. (The council of Laodicea, which expressed this ancient law in its twelfth canon, gives as the reason for it,—that such a faith, first making its appearance when a man lies on a bed of sickness, does not arise from free persuasion, but is something forced: which may be true in many cases, and the council, therefore, allowed an exception to be valid in the case of any one, who gave proofs of zeal and faith; and such an exception may have been made in regard to Novatian.) Cornelius further reproaches him with having shut himself up in a chamber out of fear, during the persecution, and refusing to leave it in order to exercise his priestly office in favour of those who needed assistance. When his deacons required him to do this, he sent them back with this answer, 'that he was now the votary of a different philosophy.' We must here, we acknowledge, have recourse to conjecture to separate the facts, which are the groundwork of this part of the history, from the form in which the hatred of Cornelius has represented them. By the words ἑτερα φιλοσοφια, we are probably to understand the more retired life of the ascetic, as contrasted with the clerical profession; Novatian might have retired for a time into solitude, as an ascetic, and have withdrawn himself from public business. This answers well to the strict character, which his principles of penitence bespeak, and, as an ascetic, he was likely to be held in considerable reverence by the Church. Novatian may have been wrong in allowing himself to be seduced by a false asceticism, and to forget Christian charity, so as to refuse to leave his spiritual tranquillity and solitude, and assist his brethren, who needed his priestly assistance; but Cornelius allowed himself to ascribe to this conduct a different motive, which was utterly unsuited to the character of Novatian*.

[* I have distinguished the passages which Dr. Neander has taken from the letter of Cornelius in Eusebius by inverted commas, to distinguish them from his remarks upon them, which are in parentheses. He has left them in the German without any marks of quotation; but I felt them requisite for the sake of clearness in English. The theological reader need not be reminded, that in Eusebius and other Greek writers, Novatian is commonly called Novatus. H. J. R.]

less need to resort to an explanation, deduced from an external cause, which is supported by no historical proof[4].

The passionate adversaries of Novatian accused him of being induced by ambitious desires of the episcopal dignity, to excite these disturbances, and set himself up for the head of a party.—But this is in the usual style of theological polemics: namely, to deduce schisms and heresies from external and unhallowed motives, although they have no proof of their existence. Novatian, on some opportunity after the vacation of the Roman see by the death of Fabian, had pledged himself by an oath, that he would not sue for the episcopal dignity, nor desire such an office, although he might, through the reverence entertained for him, as an ascetic and a dogmatical theologian, by a great part of the Church, perhaps have obtained it easily. We have no reason here, with bishop Cornelius, to accuse Novatian of perjury. An ascetic who loved repose, and a theologian, who busied himself undisturbedly with his dogmatical speculations, he might be in good earnest, when he declared, that he had no inclination for an office so overwhelmed with business, as the bishopric of Rome then was. However, Cornelius knew that he sighed *in secret* after the episcopal dignity; but whence, we may ask, had Cornelius the eyes to see in secret and penetrate the hidden recesses of his adversary's heart! Cyprian himself gives us a hint that a party controversy about principles, which at first was considered wholly of an objective kind, had preceded, and that when a schism was by this made unavoidable, the opposite party then first set up another bishop, as their head, in opposition to Cornelius[5].

[4] It is by no means clear that the enemies of Novatian themselves believed in this account of the source of his notions. Though Cyprian accused his notions of being more stoical than Christian (Ep. lii. ad Antonian.; Ep. lv. ed. Ox.), yet this may very naturally be explained as alluding to the *nature* of these notions, and not to their source; and though he reproaches him thus: "Jactet se licet et philosophiam vel eloquentiam suam superbis vocibus prædicet:" yet the first part of this sentence alludes to the τριβων, the pallium of the ἀσκητης (see the foregoing note), or to the fame of an admirable dogmatical writer, which Novatian had acquired, as the author of the book "de Regula Fidei," or "de Trinitate," as even Cornelius says of him, in the letter we have quoted in the foregoing note, οὐτος ὁ δογματιστης, ὁ της ἐκκλησιαστικης ἐπιστημης ὑπερασπιστης.

[5] Cyprian, Ep. lxii. (Ep. xlv. ed. Ox.) "Diversæ partis obstinata et inflexibilis pertinacia *non tantum* matris sinum recusavit; sed etiam *gliscente et in pejus recrudescente discordia, episcopum* sibi constituit."

[A few words, of no great importance, are left out in this quotation. H. J. R.]

Novatian's zeal only out of regard for the supposed purity of the Church, moved him to contend against the decay of Church discipline, without wishing or meaning any thing further. This man, therefore, firm in his persuasion, and violently zealous in defence of that persuasion, but as far as natural disposition is concerned, utterly removed from all restless and outward motives, was made the head of a party, against his own will, by those who agreed with him in principles, and compelled to take upon himself the rank of bishop. He might, therefore, in this respect, in his letter to Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, justly appeal to his *having been carried on against his will*[6].

The man who was really *the active soul* of this party, and whose influence probably caused the party to break loose from Cornelius entirely, and create another bishop for itself, came from a different quarter. That Carthaginian presbyter, Novatus, who had been the soul of dissension in the North African Church, had removed himself thence, when Cyprian obtained the upper hand; whether it was, that he was no longer contented with the principles of the party of Felicissimus, and yet would not be reconciled to Cyprian, and acknowledge him for his bishop; or whether it was *only the failure* of his machinations against Cyprian which drove him to this step. He had betaken himself to Rome, and there he found the seeds of that contention already sown. It was in his very nature not to be quiet and neutral, while strife and agitation were going forward. According to the principles which he had defended at Carthage in connexion with the four presbyters and Felicissimus, he ought to have espoused the cause of Cornelius. But whether it was, that he had entirely changed his sentiments on the subjects in dispute—which might have happened through the influence of Novatian as his superior in theoretical theology, or from his own violent disposition, so ready to go from one extreme to another—or whether he only took an interest in one object of contention[7], at Rome as

[6] ὁτι ἀκων ἠχθη.

[7] Mosheim defends Novatus against the accusation of contradicting himself, by supposing that he did not belong to the five presbyters, and that he did not agree with them and with Felicissimus in this respect, but only in a common opposition to Cyprian. But the proofs cited above make against this supposition. The strongest ground which Mosheim brings forward for his opinion is this;—that Cyprian, who raked up all possible grounds of accusation against Novatus, nevertheless does not charge him with contradicting himself, when he had a capital oppor-

well as Carthage, and that he was from disposition constantly a friend to the party in opposition, that he was inclined to join that party, at *the head of which there was no bishop*, and that Cornelius was hated by him from some other grounds;—it is enough for us, that Novatus passionately espoused the principles of the party of Novatian, and entered warmly into the contest. It was his mode of proceeding, whether at Rome or at Carthage, to be the moving spring of all troubles, and yet not to set himself, but another, at the head of the party. It might, therefore, be in consequence of *his* active influence, that the breach grew still wider, and that the honoured Novatian was obliged to take the lead, and assume the rank of bishop.

In respect to those who had fallen away from the faith during the Decian persecution, Cornelius had acted according to the milder principle, and had admitted many to the communion of the Church, who were, at least, accused by the other party as "sacrificati." Novatian, and his adherents, made this a subject of accusation against him, as having polluted the Church by the reception of unclean persons into it; and (after the usual way of passionate controversialists) as on the one hand, Cornelius had accused Novatian of having made all this stir out of an ambition which thirsted after the episcopal office; so on the other, a part at least of the followers of Novatian, imputed the mildness of Cornelius towards other men, to the circumstance that his own conscience accused him of a similar offence, for he was a "libellaticus." Cyprian, Ep. lii. [Ep. xlv. ed. Ox.] Both parties endeavoured, as is usual in contentions like these, to win over to their side the voice of those great head Churches at Alexandria, Antioch, and Carthage, and sent deputies to them. The zeal for the strictness of Church discipline, and the purity of Christian conduct, which Novatian showed, and the weighty influence of certain confessors who were at first in connexion with him, procured him access hither and thither, and even a bishop of Antioch, Fabius, was on the point of joining his party. Dionysius, the bishop of Alexandria, a man of mild, moderate, and free spirit, was from the beginning an opponent of the principles of Novatian, but he endeavoured at first to move Novatian

tunity of doing so. But we may perhaps imagine, that Cyprian would be tender of touching on this point, because he might fear a retort, reminding him of the change in his own sentiments.

to give in, by means of friendly persuasion. He wrote thus in reply to him[8]: "If thou art, as thou sayest, carried away against thy will, prove it by retracting of your own accord; for thou oughtest to have suffered any thing, rather than have founded a schism in the Church. And a martyrdom, in order to avoid a schism, would not be less glorious than one to escape offering to idols[9], nay, in my opinion, it would be something greater; for in the one case a man becomes a martyr for the sake of his own soul; in the other, he does so for the sake of the whole Church. If, therefore, thou wilt now persuade or constrain the brethren to return to unanimity, the good thou doest by this means, will be greater than the evil thou hast caused. The one will not be reckoned to thee; but the other will be praised; even if thou art unable to persuade them, and fail in thy purpose, yet at any rate try to save thy own soul. Mayest thou keep peace in the Lord! I wish thee heartily farewell." But as Novatian was too deeply rooted in his opinions, and too much occupied by his polemic zeal, to be able to listen to such representations, the kind-hearted Dionysius now declared himself more strongly against him, and endeavoured also to draw away others from his party. He accused him[1] of bringing forward the most unhallowed doctrines about God, and of calumniating the merciful Jesus Christ as an unmerciful being.

Novatian might have better hopes of finding support in North Africa, because Cyprian himself had been inclined, in earlier days, to principles of the same kind in regard to penitence; but he had, in the meantime, as we above remarked, changed his opinions and his line of conduct, on account of which he was accused of inconsistency and variableness[2], and he saw, at the same time,

[8] Euseb. vi. 45.

[9] [Και ἠν οὐκ ἀδοξοτερα της ἑνεκεν του μη σχισαι μαρτυρια, καϑ' ἐμε δε και μειζων.

The passage stands thus in the edition of Reading, but it gives then no reasonable sense. There is a note from Pearson and W. Lowth, recommending the reading θυσαι instead of σχισαι, which the translation of Rufinus seems to support. In the elaborate edition of Euseb. H. E. just published by Heinichen (Lips. 1829), he has adopted the reading supported by Stroth, αδοξοτερα της ἑνεκεν του μη εἰδωλολατρησαι γινομενης ἠ ἑνεκεν του μη σχισαι μαρτυρια, and supposes this line to have been omitted in Valesius by a typographical error. It is to be hoped that this work may be followed up by the other ecclesiastical historians.—H. J. R.]

[1] Euseb. vii. 8.

[2] Ep. lii. (Ep. lv. ed. Ox.) "Ne me aliquis existimet, a proposito meo leviter recessisse."

in Novatian, the disturber of the unity of the Church, a man who opposed a bishop regularly chosen, appointed by God himself, and one who wished to prescribe his own principles to the Church, as its law.

The controversy with the party of Novatian turned upon two general points :—

1. On the principles of penitence.

2. On what constitutes the idea and the essence of a true Church.

In regard to the first, Novatian has often been unjustly accused of maintaining the following doctrine: No one who has violated his baptismal covenant by a sin, can ever obtain again the pardon of his sin, he is sure of eternal condemnation. In the first place, Novatian never maintained that a Christian was a perfect saint, and he was not here speaking of all sins, but he presupposed the distinction of "peccata mortalia," and "peccata venialia," and only spoke of the former. And in the next place, he was not speaking at all of the *forgiveness of sins by God*, but only of the judgment of the Church, of *the absolution* of the Church. The Church, he meant to say, has no right to give absolution to a man, who, by a mortal sin, has forfeited the forgiveness of sins obtained by Christ, and appropriated to him in baptism. God has revealed no determination in regard to such men ; for the forgiveness of sins promised in the Gospel, relates only to sins committed *before baptism*. These fallen brethren must certainly be taken care of; but nothing more can be done for them than to exhort them to repentance, and commend them to the mercy of God. According to Socrates, (iv. 28.) Novatian wrote thus :—"We must not receive the 'sacrificati' to the communion, but only exhort them to repentance, and leave the forgiveness of their sins to God alone, who has the power to forgive sins." Even Cyprian supposes these to be the principles of Novatian, although, in the heat of controversy, he did not always remember it, as we see when he says, Ep. lii. (Ep. lv. ed. Ox.) "Oh! what mockery of the deluded brethren ! oh ! what a vain deception of those unhappy men, who are lamenting ! to exhort them to a penitence by which they are to give satisfaction to God—and to withdraw from them the medicine, which might give them the means of this satisfaction ! To say to your brother: lament and shed tears, sigh day and night ! do all the good in thy power, to wash away thy sins, but after all, thou shalt die with-

out the Church. Thou must do the things pertaining to peace, but the peace thou seekest thou shalt never attain[3]! Who would not perish instantly? Who would not give up from mere despair? Dost thou believe, that the husbandman could labour, if a man were to say to him: 'Spend all thy care and labour on the culture of thy field, but thou shalt never reap an harvest!'"

As we see from the above quoted explanation of Novatian from the work of Socrates, at first the controversy regarded only *one of the offences*, which went under the name of "peccata mortalia;" they were only debating about the conduct which implied a denial of Christianity. On the supposition, that Novatian was at first so severe on this kind of transgression, Cyprian was perfectly justified in combating the whole moral view, which was the foundation of this line of conduct, he was quite justified in contending against the notion, that only such offences, as a denial of God, or a denial of Christianity, were to be called offences against God, as if every sin were not an offence against God, and a practical denial of God and Christianity: "Now the offence," says Cyprian, Ep. lii. (Ep. lv. ed. Ox.) "of the adulterer and deceiver, is far worse than that of the 'libellaticus;' the one sins by compulsion, the other by choice; the 'libellaticus' is deceived by the notion, that it is enough not to have sacrificed. . . . . Adulterers and deceivers, according to the saying of the apostle (Ephes. v. 5), are as idolaters. For as our bodies are members of Christ, and as every one of us is a temple of Christ, he who injures the temple of God by adultery, injures God; and he who does the will of the devil in committing offences, serves the devils and idols. For evil works came not from the Holy Spirit, but from the instigation of the adversary; and evil desires, born of the evil spirit, compel men to act against God, and to serve the devil." But afterwards, at least, the party of Novatian applied their principle to the whole class of "peccata mortalia," which most probably Novatian himself had intended from the very first, although the immediate subject of controversy led him only to speak of *one* sort of "peccata mortalia." We cannot suppose an ascetic, like himself, to be very much inclined to treat voluptuous sins too mildly.

And besides, Novatian, in the extract from Socrates, speaks

[3] To say the truth, this was an opinion not quite suited to Novatian, whose language would rather be: "Do all in thy power to attain again to thy lost peace with God; but *no man* can give you a *certain pledge* that you have attained it."

only of such as had sacrificed. But if Cyprian does not misrepresent Novatian, he most unjustly classed together, at least at first, all who had been unfaithful, in any way whatever, during the persecution, "libellatici," as well as "sacrificati," without regard to the various gradations of their offences, and the different circumstances which accompanied them; and without considering that so many among the "libellatici" were guilty of an error and a misunderstanding, rather than of a sin, he utterly refused absolution to all the "libellatici" as well as to the "sacrificati."

Beautifully, in the manner in which Cyprian combated these principles of Novatian[4], does the paternal and loving heart of the pious shepherd, who followed the example of his Lord, speak forth, as well as the spirit of Christian love and tenderness which animated him. He puts the supposition, that many of the "libellatici," whose conscience did not reprove them, would be led away by despair, to tear themselves away from the Church, and to ask for admittance into some sect of heretics: and he says, "It will be laid to our charge, in the day of judgment, that we cared not for the sick sheep, and that we have lost many healthy sheep on account of one that was sick. While the Lord left the ninety and nine whole sheep to seek that which was wandering and weary, we, it would seem, not only do not seek the lost sheep, but when it returns, we reject it." He then opposes this harshness by passages from the writings of the apostle, 1 Cor. ix. 22; xii. 26; x. 33, &c.; and he adds, "The case stands quite differently with the philosophers and stoics, who say, that all sins are equal, and that a stedfast man must not easily be brought to bend. But there is a vast difference between Christians and philosophers. . . . . We must avoid what comes not from the mercy of God, but from the presumption of cruel philosophy. . . . . The Lord says in his Gospel, 'Be ye merciful, even as your Father has mercy on you;' and again, 'the whole have not need of a physician, but they that are sick.' What healing can he perform who says, 'I care only for the healing of the whole—of those who need no physician.' . . . . . See! there lies thy brother, wounded by the enemy in battle. On the one side, Satan endeavours to kill him, whom he has wounded: on the other, Christ exhorts us not to allow him to perish, whom He has

[4] Ep. lii. (Ep. lv. ed. Ox.)

redeemed. To which of these two do we give our assistance? on whose side are we standing? Do we further the devil's work, and allow him to kill, do we pass by our brother, lying half dead, like the priest and the Levite in the Gospel? or do we, like priests of God and Christ, following what Christ has both taught and done, carry off the wounded man from the fangs of his adversary, that we may reserve him for God's final judgment, when we have done what we can for his cure[5]?"

Beautifully and truly as all this was said against the *spirit of* Novatianism, yet the principles of Novatian could not be met and contradicted by it. Even Novatian declared that the fallen brethren must be received and exhorted to penitence. He also acknowledged the mercy of God towards sinners, and he would also allow men to commend these fallen brethren to that mercy, but he would not allow men again with certainty to announce to them that forgiveness of sins, which they had once forfeited, because he found no objective grounds for such a confidence. The only method of effectually answering him, was by showing him such an objective ground of confidence for all sinners, namely, in the merits of Christ, which the sinner always needed only to appropriate to himself, by penitence united with faith, and by a firm reliance on those merits. But on this point the opponents of Novatian were not themselves explicit enough, because in opposing his principles they sometimes appealed to 1 John i. 1, 2, but then they so expressed themselves, as if the forgiveness of sins, obtained for man by Christ, only related to sins committed before baptism, and as if in respect to sins, committed after it, there was need of a peculiar and personal satisfaction by good works. Once lay down this position, and Novatian was fairly entitled to ask, "And who will give us a pledge that any such satisfaction is available?"

As far as concerns the second point[6] in dispute, the notion of

[5] "Ut curatum Deo judici reservemus," that is to say, upon the supposition that absolution cannot forestall the judgment of God, but only, that if God, who looks upon the inward parts, finds man's heart corresponding to this absolution, and fitted for it, it is valid at God's own judgment-seat.

[6] Pacianus of Barcelona, who wrote in the latter half of the fourth century, shortly comprises the two principles of Novatian in the following words: "Quod mortale peccatum ecclesia donare non possit, immo quod ipsa pereat recipiendo peccantes." Ep. iii. contra Novatian. Galland. Bibl. Patr. t. vii.

the Church, Novatian held the following opinion: As the mark of purity and holiness is one of the essential marks of a *true* Church, every Church which, neglecting the right use of Church discipline, suffers those who have violated their baptismal vow by great sins, to remain in the midst of her, or receives them into her again, ceases thereby to be a true Church, and loses all the rights and advantages of such a Church. The Novatianists, therefore, as they claimed to be the only unstained, pure Church, called themselves, *οἱ καθαροι*, "the pure." It was justly said, in opposition to Novatian, that each man could be answerable and punishable only for his own sins, and no man for those of another, in which he had no share; that only the inward communion with sinners, by the dispositions of the heart, not the outward association with them, was defiling in its nature; and that it was a piece of arrogance and human pride, to wish to exercise that judicial power of separating the real and false members of the Christian Church, which the Lord had reserved to himself. Beautifully does Cyprian say on this subject, "Although there appear to be tares in the Church, let not this disturb our faith nor our charity, so as to induce us to leave the Church, because there are tares in the Church. We must labour to belong to the wheat, that, when the wheat is gathered into the garners of the Lord, we may receive the recompense of our labours. The apostle says, 'in a great house, there are not only vessels of silver and gold, but vessels of wood and clay, and some to dishonour, some also to honour.' Let us, therefore, labour, as far as we are able, to be those golden or silver vessels. To destroy the vessels of clay, is only given to the Lord alone, to whom the rod of iron has been given also. The servant cannot be greater than his Master, and no one can appropriate to himself what the Father has given only to his Son, namely, to believe himself capable of carrying the winnowing fan, to cleanse and purify the threshing-floor, or of separating the tares from the wheat[7]."

But here, again, men were unable to find the only direct argument to oppose Novatianism on this point, and the enemies of Novatian were, in fact, in the same fundamental error with him-

[7] [Dr. Neander has made no reference here to Cyprian. The passage to which this quotation appears to approach the nearest, is in Ep. lv. p. 112, ed. Ox. H. J. R.]

self, only that they differed in the application of their principle. That error was a confusion between the ideas of the visible and of the invisible Church; and from this error it was that Novatian, while he transferred the attribute of purity and unstained holiness, which belongs to the invisible Church, the communion of saints, as such (see Ephes. v. 27), to the visible form of the invisible Church, drew the conclusion, that every Church, which has unclean members in it, ceases to be a true Church. Of the invisible Church alone could he maintain, and that justly too, that she would belie her nature, and lose her marks and her rights, if she admitted false members into her; but this would be a false conclusion if it were applied to the visible Church, in which the members of the invisible Church, who are *united* by the bond of the Spirit, *lie scattered.* It was a confusion of outward and inward, when he maintained, that men became themselves unclean by mere outward society, in the same outward communion of the Church, with the unclean. But the adversaries of Novatian were unable to discover this fundamental error, from which all the other single ones proceeded, because they were themselves the slaves of the very same error. Instead of appealing to an entirely different application of the idea of the Church, Cyprian contents himself with opposing Novatian only by bringing forward a two-fold condition of the Church—one, her condition here below; the other, her condition in glory, after that separation has been completed by the last judgment. As Cyprian himself was entangled by the same error of confusing the outward with the inward, it happened also that he himself, on an after-occasion, where he had not the controversy against Novatianism before his eyes, came very close to the principles of Novatian; this was in Ep. lxviii. [Ep. lxvii. ed. Ox.] where he declared to the Spanish bishops, that they were themselves defiled by suffering unworthy priests among them, and that those who remained in connexion with sinners, became themselves partakers of their sins[8]. Here Cyprian, not distinguishing mere outward communion from inward communion of feelings, has expressed himself indistinctly, and with only half truth[9].

[8] Consortes et participes alienorum delictorum fieri, qui fuerint delinquentibus copulati.

[9] [Mosheim, in his book de Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum, has

From this contention also, the Catholic system of the Church, firmly established, and thoroughly compact in all its parts, came forth victorious, and the Novatianists extended themselves, in later centuries, only as a small separate sect.

treated the controversies about Novatus, Novatian, and Stephanus, very fully. Sæc. iii. § 11—17. His views nearly coincide with those brought forward here. H. J. R.]

SECTION III.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORSHIP.

(1.) *Christian Life.*

EVER since Christianity has been introduced as an element of human nature, it has acted in all cases, where it has taken root, with the same Divine sanctifying power; and wretched would be the state of the Church if this Divine power were liable to become extinct by the lapse of ages. In regard to the sanctifying power which resides in the Gospel, *this* period, therefore, in which Christianity first appeared to work on human nature, could have no advantages over the succeeding ages of the Christian Church. The only difference between the first ages of the Church and the succeeding centuries, was, that men, who in these early days turned from the sinful service of paganism to Christianity, felt the power of Christianity to form and reform man's nature more deeply, by comparing what they had been and what they were, and that this change of life, which had taken place in them, was more conspicuous to the rest of the world; as the apostle St. Paul, in writing to Christians converted from heathenism, reminds them of what they once were—that they once walked after the course of this world, after the spirit who hath his work in the children of unbelief—and as he, after relating the prevailing crimes of the corrupted heathen world, says to them, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) The church-teachers, who had previously been heathens, often appealed to these effects, which they had experienced in their own case. The language of Cyprian[1], in the first warmth of feeling, after his conversion, is to this effect: "Hear that which is felt before it is *learnt*, that which is not collected together by long study, but which is received in a moment by the power of grace, which hastens its work. While I lay in darkness and in blind night, and while I was driven about with uncertain and wandering feet by the

[1] Ad Donat.

waves of the world, doubtful of the conduct of my life, a stranger to truth and light, that which the Divine mercy promised for my salvation, seemed to me, after my then way of thinking, something altogether hard and difficult, that a man *should be born again*, and laying aside what he had once been, the whole corporeal frame still remaining the same, should become in soul and mind an entirely different man. How, said I, is so great a *change* possible, that what has so long taken root, should at once be done away. . . . . As I was bound and entangled by the errors of my former life, from which I believed that there could be no deliverance, so I gave myself up to the vices which beset me, and while I despaired of amendment, I encouraged my evil dispositions as if they had been a part of myself. But when, the water of regeneration having washed away the stains of my former life, the light from above shed itself into a heart freed from guilt, and purified, when the Spirit from heaven had been breathed into me, and formed me by a second birth into a *new* man, then most wonderfully that became certain to me, which had been doubtful before; that was open which had been closed; that was light where I had before seen only darkness; that became easy which had been difficult; that became practicable which before had seemed impossible; so that I can now perceive that the life I led, when being born after the flesh I lived subject to sin, was a worldly life; but the life which I have now begun to lead, is the beginning of a life proceeding from God, a life animated by the influence of the Holy Spirit. From God, I say, from God is all our might, from Him we receive life and power." Justin Martyr paints the change which took place in Christians thus[2]: "we who once delighted in debauchery, now love only purity; we who once used magic arts, have now consecrated ourselves to the good and unbegotten God; we who once loved gain beyond all things, now give up to the common use even what we have, and share it with every one that has need; we who once hated and murdered one another, we who would not enjoy the hearth in common with strangers on account of the difference of our customs, now live in common with them, since the appearance of Christ: we pray for our enemies, we seek to persuade those who hate us unjustly, that they may direct their lives according to the glorious doctrine of Christ, and may share with us the joyful hope

[2] Apolog. ii. c. 17. [Apol. i. p. 20, ed. Thirlb. H. J. R.]

of enjoying the same privileges from God, the Lord of all things." Origen[3] says, "The work of Jesus Christ is shown in the whole world, where the Churches of God founded by Christ, and consisting of men reformed from a thousand crimes, exist; and the name of Jesus still further has a wonderful efficacy in introducing mildness, decency of manners, humanity, goodness, and gentleness among those who embrace the belief of the doctrine of God and Christ, and of a judgment to come, not for any worldly advantage nor purpose, but honestly and uprightly[4]."

As the contrast of heathenism and Christianity, which is no other than that between the old and the new man, was so strongly marked in the different periods of the lives of individuals, so was it also with regard to the relation between Christians, considered collectively, and the corrupt heathen world in which, after the flesh, they still lived, and from out of which, after the spirit, they were already departed. Although in later times the world, still heathenish in disposition and feelings, had put on the garb of Christianity, and it was difficult to distinguish the few genuine and upright Christians from the general mass of nominal ones, yet at this earlier period heathenism stood forth in all its naked deformity, the prevailing party in the world, in distinct opposition to Christianity. To this contrast Origen appeals when he says, "Compared with the communities of the people among whom they are placed, the communities of Christians are as lights in the world[5]."

Whatever inducements there may have been in later times to a mere outward Christianity—the external advantages connected with the profession of Christianity, as the religion of the state, and custom which makes men cleave to a religion inherited from their ancestors, without any peculiar inward call and feelings in their own case—all these in this period (especially in the first half of it) had no existence. The greater number of converts in these days was from a religion which education, the reverence for antiquity, the power of custom, and the external advantages united to its observance recommended to them, and it was a conversion to a religion which had every thing *against it*, which the other had *in its favour*, and which from the very first required

[3] Contra Cels. Lib. i. § 67. [(p. 53. ed. Spencer.) This quotation is abridged from the original.—H. J. R.]

[4] Ἐν τοις μη δια τα βιωτικα ἡ τινας χρειας ἀνθρωπικας ὑποκρινομενοις.

[5] Contra Cels. Lib. iii. c. 29. [p. 128, ed. Spen.]

many sacrifices from its converts, and set before them many dangers and sufferings.

And yet we should altogether mistake the essential qualities of *man's nature* which, in its relation to Christianity, is always the same, we should altogether mistake the nature of *Christianity*, which uses no *magical* means to work on man's will to attract and reform him, and we should also mistake the nature of *this age*, if we expected to find, in any point during this period, a time when the Church consisted, I will not say of perfect saints, for there are none of these on earth, but wholly of genuine Christians, animated entirely by pure Christianity, or faith working by love. Although the inducements to an *hypocritical* profession of Christianity were fewer, yet they were not wholly wanting. The support which the poor received in Christian communities, may perhaps have proved a means of attraction to many, who had no religious interest in the matter; and there is a hint to this effect in the above-cited passage of Origen, where he says, that the name of Christ can show its Divine efficacy only among those, who do not feign their belief from human motives.

But without considering these feigned Christians, yet even among those, in whose hearts the seed of the Gospel had really fallen, our Lord's parable of the sower must often have proved itself true. This seed could not find, in every heart into which it fell, the ground fitted for its reception, the ground in which it could spring up as it ought, and bring forth fruit. It might well happen in this age, as in every other, that men, who were for a moment touched by the power of truth, might not use these impressions as they ought, might become faithless to the truth, and instead of consecrating to it their whole life, might wish to serve God and the world at the same time, and thence, at length, again be completely enslaved by the world. He who did not watch over his own heart, who did not constantly with fear and trembling, endeavour, in his inward being under the guidance of the Divine Spirit, to separate that which is of the Spirit from that which is of the world, was exposed to the same sources of self-deception, and thence to the same danger of falling as in other times. Some sources of self-deception, to which, in fact, ultimately, all others are to be referred, are grounded in human nature itself; and these only show themselves in a different manner under different relations, and attach themselves, sometimes on one set of outward circumstances, sometimes on another;

others, again, are peculiar to different centuries, and, indeed, all external circumstances, however desirable, considered in themselves alone, they may be for man, may, if true light be not shed on his inward heart, and he watch not over himself, become means of self-delusion to him. It cannot be unconditionally declared of any circumstances or condition, considered abstractedly, *that by them vital Christianity must be furthered;* all depends constantly on the tendency of man's own will, to which the use or misuse of these circumstances is entrusted. The very same circumstances which further Christianity in one man, may, if they are not used as they ought to be, become the cause of stumbling in the case of another.

The striking opposition between Christianity and the heathenism which was then the prevailing rule of life, between the Christian Church and the world, preserved the Christians from many of those intermixtures between the Church and the world, between spiritual and worldly things, which became so common in later days; but to many, who did not view this opposition in the proper light, it became a source of dangerous self-delusion. When they had sternly renounced every thing which externally came to them in a heathen shape; when they had outwardly renounced the service of heathen superstition and heathen profligacy, they believed that they had done enough; and so, while they made of this outward renunciation a kind of *opus operatum*, which served to cherish and support a pride, which was utterly a stranger to the spirit of love, and a false confidence, they overlooked, on that account, the still more severe struggle with the spirit of heathenism within them, the manifold springs of selfishness and of a more refined love of the world, which are the more dangerous, because they are more concealed, and because they come in the shape of a friend. The plain and open contrast between Christianity and heathenism, the Church and the world, might mislead many into priding themselves, after a fleshly manner, on their superiority over the heathen; as if, by the mere outward profession of the faith, and the habitual use of the outward observances of Christianity, they were raised far above the heathen, as servants of Satan, and might fairly consider themselves already citizens of that heavenly kingdom, from which the heathen were excluded. And even among those who made being a Christian no *opus operatum*, but who justly estimated the requirements of this calling, and seriously strove to fulfil them,

there was still a source of danger in the violence of spiritual pride and bitter enmity, with which they regarded the heathen, because it gave room in their hearts for other feelings than those of humility and thankfulness, arising from the consciousness that they once lay in the same corruption, and the same spiritual death as their heathen brethren, from which the grace of God had now delivered them; and other feelings than those impulses of love which would urge them to endeavour to lead their still unhappy brethren, with whom they were connected by so many ties of nature, and for whom Christ had also died, into that blessedness which had been bestowed on themselves by the grace of God. When once such feelings had been taken up, how easily would they find means of making their way among men, who were still living in the flesh, and of extending themselves widely!

The outward fight against the world, which reminded the Christians of their calling to battle (as milites Dei et Christi), might serve to awaken their faith and Christian virtue; but this very fight also, if the inclinations of the old man were not constantly repressed by the power of the Holy Spirit and the ardour of love, might generate and maintain a certain gloomy and austere temper, utterly repugnant to that spirit of love and friendship, which the apostle names among the fruits of the Spirit, and calls χρηστοτης. In the outward battle the inward might be forgotten, and the victory in it, as we have often had occasion to remark, might become the means of cherishing pride, false confidence, and fleshly security.

Many, however, were induced, by the consciousness of sin, to seek forgiveness, and this want led them to Christianity; but they could not resolve to give to the Gospel that sacrifice of the heart which it requires, and without which none of its blessed, sanctifying, and happy influence can be revealed. They conceived the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins and of grace in a fleshly manner, pressing Christianity into the service of their fleshly imaginations, and so they wished to have forgiveness of their sins without leaving the practice of them, a fancy against which St. Paul so often had warned mankind, as when he said, "Shall we then continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! How shall we, that are *dead* to sin, *live* any longer therein?" They transferred their heathenish notion of the magical power of lustrations to baptism, and they thought that by it they should receive at once, without the proper preparation in the heart, a magical

extinction of sin, so that under this idea they delayed their baptism, and in the mean time gave themselves up to their lusts. The teachers of the Christian Church set themselves heartily to work, to combat his notion. Tertullian says against it in his book on Repentance, ch. vi. "How foolish and how wicked is it, not to fulfil the duty of repentance, and yet to expect pardon for sin! it is exactly this, not to pay the price and yet to stretch the hand out for the goods, for *this* is the price at which God has set the pardon for sin. . . . As therefore those who sell any thing, examine first the money for which they have agreed, to see that it be neither scraped nor worn, nor counterfeit; so we suppose also that the Lord makes trial beforehand of our repentance, when he is about to give us so valuable a possession as eternal life. . . . The divine grace, that is, the forgiveness of sin, remains unimpaired for those who are to be baptized; but then they must perform their part, so as to become capable of receiving it. . . . You may, indeed, easily steal into baptism, and by your protestations deceive those, whose business it is, into administering the rite to you. But God watches over his treasure, and will not allow the unworthy to steal into it. . . . . Envelope yourself in whatever darkness you may, God is light. But many think that God is bound to keep whatever he has promised, even with those who are unworthy of it, and they bind his free grace in terms of slavery[6]." Tertullian justly appeals to experience, which shows, that in those who come in such a spirit to baptism, the effects of Christianity could not be shown, and that they often fall away again, inasmuch as they built their house upon the sand. Against such persons, Origen argues that the benefits of baptism wholly depend on the hearts of those who receive it, and are only bestowed on those who come to it in a true spirit of penitence; but, on the contrary, that to those with whom this spirit is wanting, baptism only tends to condemnation; and therefore, that the spirit of renovation, which accompanies baptism, is not bestowed upon all[7]. In order to guard against the notions of such unreal Christians, in Cyprian's Collection of Testimonies for the Laity, after he has laid down the position, that no one can belong to the kingdom of God, unless he has been

[6] Exactly like those Jews, so full of fleshly pride, whom St. Paul combats in his Epistle to the Romans,—men who thought that God could never reject them, the true-born heirs of his kingdom, and banish them from it.

[7] T. vi. Joh. c. 17.

baptized and born again, he adds, "And yet it is but of little use that a man should be baptized and receive the sacrament, unless he shows himself bettered in conduct and in his works[8]:" and the passages of the New Testament which he adduces, are well calculated to show the worthlessness of such a mere nominal Christianity: 1 Cor. ix. 24; Matt. iii. 10; v. 16; vii. 22; Philip. ii. 15; and then he also says, "He that is baptized, may also lose the grace that he has received, if he remains not in a state of purity from sin." And he cites in proof the following passages of the Bible: John v. 14; 1 Cor. iii. 17; 2 Chron. xv. 3.

It must certainly be acknowledged, that however earnestly the teachers of the Church combated a notion so prejudicial to the Christian life, yet the partially injurious consequences of that interchange of *outward* and *inward* things, are to be traced in the doctrines about the Church and sacraments; and it was here that this notion would find support, and something to attach itself to. It is, on this account, of great practical importance, that the doctrines of religion should be preserved by the clearest development of the ideas belonging to them, from a perversion, which the fleshly appetites of man are naturally inclined to cherish.

As one set of persons, by substituting the outward observances of religion for its inward feelings, supported their continuance in the practice of sins which they were unwilling to renounce, another made themselves easy by the semblance of an inward religion, independent of every thing outward. "God," said they, "is satisfied, if He be honoured in heart and soul, although there be a deficiency of works in consequence of human weakness."—"This is," says Tertullian, in holy indignation, "to *sin* without violating the reverence due to God, and without violating our faith; but then, such persons may be condemned without any violation of God's mercy[9]."

It was peculiar to Christianity, that it could find its way into men's hearts by addressing the fleshly knowledge and feelings of man, and form this fleshly gradually into a spiritual nature, while it worked upon the inmost foundations of human nature, and by communicating a Divine principle of life, produced a conduct, the consequences of which, in relation to the whole spiritual and moral life, could only develope themselves gradually in their

[8] Lib. iii. 25, 26. "Parum esse baptizari et eucharistiam accipere, nisi quis factis et opere proficiat."

[9] Tertullian, de Pœnitentia, c. v.

full extent. In our estimate, therefore, of the men of this time, who received this new and abundant spirit in the form which clung to them from their former carnal education and modes of thought, we must be careful not to judge harshly of their inward feelings from many of the rude notions that still remained to them, and from which they could only be freed gradually by the spiritualization of their whole habits of thought. The great saying of the apostle may here often find a just application in this sense; that God's treasures are received into earthen vessels, and there preserved for a long time in order that the abundant power may be of God, and not of men. It is, therefore, a very superficial and unjust judgment to pass on men, who formed to themselves wonderful imaginations about God, and Divine things, and the kingdom of God, immediately to conclude, that they had nothing of Christian life within them. When, indeed, men of this sort, having been induced to believe by some outward or inward motives, did not, in consequence, give themselves up to the Spirit of Christ, so that He might complete his work of regeneration in them; when they still obstinately adhered to the fleshly Christ of their own fancy, and expected from Him, though not now, yet hereafter, only carnal things; and when they would not be of those who having known Christ only according to the flesh, would know Him thus no longer? we may conclude that they belong to those, with whom the seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it; they had heard and received the word, but their fleshly thoughts, which they would not renounce, choked the word, so that it could produce no fruit. Even although the expectation of a sensual happiness in a remote futurity, of which, with all the enthusiastic powers of imagination, they formed to themselves such conceptions as would enchant their sensual notions, was sufficient to induce them to deny the appetites of the moment, and even to bear tortures and to meet death, they might, nevertheless, be far from that real new birth, by which alone man can enter into the kingdom of God; and the spirit of ennobling love, which is the essential mark of a disciple of Christ, and which, even where something of earthly dross remains, comes forth in such manifestations as are not to be mistaken, at least by the spiritual eye,—this spirit could never have found, in that sort of life, access to their hearts.

We must, therefore, be cautious, on the one hand, that we do not expect to find, in these first days of the Church, any exclu-

sively *golden age* of purity; nor, in the visible Church, any community, entirely glorious, and without spot or wrinkle[1], nor any thing of the sort; and, on the other hand, that we do not fail to perceive the heavenly beauty which really did beam through the stains and blemishes of the early Church. If a man look only on one side or on the other exclusively, he figures to himself either some form of ideal perfection or some disfigured caricature; but an unprejudiced representation, after unprejudiced observation, will avoid both these errors.

That which our Saviour himself, in his last conversation with his disciples, proclaimed as the mark by which his disciples might be known, the mark of their fellowship with him and their heavenly Father, and the mark of his glory dwelling among them—namely, that they should love one another,—this was assuredly the prominent feature of the early Christian Churches; a feature which did not fail to strike even the heathen themselves. The names "brother" and "sister," which the Christians interchanged, were not empty names; the kiss of brotherhood, which was bestowed on every person at his admission into the Christian Church, after baptism, by those Christians into whose immediate society he was about to enter; this kiss, which the members of a Church bestowed on one another, before the celebration of the communion, and with which every Christian saluted another even when he saw him for the first time, was no mere formality[2], but all this

[1] The apologetic writers themselves do not deny, that there were many that passed under the name of Christians, who yet belied the very nature of Christianity by their lives, and gave occasion to the heathen to calumniate Christianity; but then they declare, that these men were never recognised as Christians by the Christian Churches; and they require the heathen to judge all according to their lives, and whatever they found worthy of punishment, to punish it, wherever it might be. So Justin Martyr and so Tertullian, (ad Nation. lib. i. c. 5.) The latter says, "When you say that the Christians are the basest of men in regard to covetousness, luxury, and dishonesty, we are not about to deny that there are some of that kind; even in the cleanest body a mole will sometimes make its appearance."

[2] Every one who knows human nature, will easily see that this cannot be affirmed of any thing, and of any period, entirely without limitation. What was originally only a pure expression of heartfelt sensations, and remains so among a great many, may yet become, among others, only a counterfeited gesture, and in their self-delusion they may perhaps think that they thereby make amends for *the spirit*, in which they are wanting, and which cannot be counterfeited. Clement of Alexandria accordingly complains, that there were many in his time who made a matter of ostentation of the brotherly kiss, and gave great offence to the heathen unnecessarily, by that means, and who placed the essential of brotherly love in the brotherly kiss. He says, on this subject, (Pædagog. lib. iii. p. 256, 257,) "Love must be estimated by benevolence, not by the brotherly kiss. But there are many,

was originally an expression of Christian feeling, and a token of the relations in which Christians considered one another. This was the thing, as we have before had occasion to remark, which, in an age of cold selfishness, most struck the heathen—that men, from so many different countries, of such different circumstances and relations one with the other, and of such different degrees of education, should appear in such inward harmony and union with each other; as, for instance, that a stranger coming into a town, and having made himself known to the Christians, through an "epistola formata," as a real brother Christian, immediately received, even from those to whom he was personally unknown, all the attentions and the support befitting a brother.

The care of providing for the support and maintenance of the stranger, the poor, and the sick, of the old men, widows, and orphans, and of those who were imprisoned for the faith's sake, devolved on the whole community. This was one of the chief purposes for which voluntary contributions at the times of assembling for divine service were established, and the charity of individuals outstripped even this. How peculiarly this was considered as the business of a Christian mistress of a family, we may judge from Tertullian, where, in painting the disadvantages of a marriage between a heathen and a Christian woman, he peculiarly dwells on this, that the Christian would be obstructed in that which was usually reckoned as in the circle of a Christian woman's domestic duties. "What heathen," says he, "will suffer his wife, in visiting the brethren, to go from street to street, into strangers', and even into the most miserable cottages? Who will suffer them to steal into prisons, to kiss the chains of martyrs? If a stranger-brother comes, what reception will he find in a *stranger's house*[3]? If she has to bestow alms on any

who only disturb the Church with the brotherly kiss, without having the spirit of love in their hearts (οἱ δε οὐδεν ἀλλ' ἡ φιληματι καταψοφουσι τας ἐκκλησιας, το φιλουν ἐνδον οὐκ ἐχοντες αὐτο). This has also spread about an evil jealousy and accusations, because men give publicly the brotherly kiss, which ought to be done privately. The salutations also of those who are dear to us, in the streets, so as to be seen of the heathen, are not of the smallest value. For if it be right to pray to God in our chamber in secret, it follows from this, that we ought to show our love to our neighbour also in secret in our inward heart, and yield to the times, because we are the salt of the earth."

[3] Tertullian apparently lays a particular stress on the word "stranger," "in aliena domo," the house which is a strange one to the Christian; as the house of a Christian woman ought not to be a strange one to him.

one, the safe and the cellar are closed to her[4]." On the other hand, he lays it down as one of the joys attendant on a marriage between Christians, that the wife may visit the sick and support the needy, and need not be under anxiety about her almsgiving[5].

The active brotherly love of each Church was not, however, limited to its own narrow circle, but extended to the wants of Churches in distant places. Under any pressing necessity of this nature the bishops appointed special collections to be made, and also appointed fast-days, in order that what was spared from the daily expenses even of the poorer members of the community might be contributed to the general need[6]. If the Churches of the provincial towns were too poor to meet any pressing distress, they applied to the richer one in the metropolis. A case, for example, had occurred, in which Christian men and women from Numidia had fallen into captivity among the neighbouring barbarians, and the Numidian Churches were unable to raise the sum requisite for their ransom; they applied to the richer Church of the great North African metropolis. Cyprian, the bishop of Carthage, soon raised a sum of more than four thousand dollars[7], and sent it with a letter which breathed the true spirit of Christian sympathy and brotherly love[8]. "In cases like these," he writes to them, "who would not feel sorrow, and who would not look upon his brother's suffering as his own! as the apostle Paul says: 'When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it,' and in another place, 'Who is weak, and I become not weak?' Therefore must we consider the captivity of our brethren as our own captivity, and the sorrow of those in danger as our own affliction, inasmuch as we are bound together into one body; and not only love, but religion ought to incite and cheer us on in redeeming the lives of the brethren who are our members. For the apostle Paul again, in another place, says, 'Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you?' (1 Cor. iii. 16.) and so even if love

[4] Ad Uxorem, ii. 4.

[5] Loc. cit. c. 8. "Libere æger visitatur, indigens sustentatur, eleemosynæ sine tormento."

[6] Tertullian, de Jejuniis, c. 13. "Episcopi universæ plebi mandare jejunia assolent—industria stipium conferendarum."

[7] Sestertia centum millia nummorum. [About 800*l*. H. J. R.]

[8] Ep. lx. [Ep. lxii. ed. Ox.]

will not move us to give assistance to our brethren, we ought to remember here, that it is the temple of God which is in captivity, and we ought not, by long delays and by a neglect of these calamities, to suffer that the temple of God should remain long in captivity. . . . For since the apostle Paul says, 'As many of you as are baptized, have put on Christ,' so must we see Christ in our captive brethren, and we must redeem Him from captivity, who redeemed us from death, so that He who has saved us from the jaws of Satan, and who now dwells and remains in us, may himself be freed from the hands of barbarians, and that He may be redeemed by a sum of money, who redeemed us by his cross and blood; and He hath allowed this in the mean time to take place, in order that our faith may be tried, whether every one will do that for others, which he would wish to be done for himself, were he in captivity among barbarians. For who that is alive to the feelings of humanity and mutual love, would not, if he is a father, look upon it as if it regarded his own sons, or if he be a husband, would not feel that, as it were, his own wife is taken captive, to the shame and the sorrow of the conjugal yoke? . . . And we wish also, that for the future nothing of this sort may happen, and that our brethren, by the might of the Lord, may be preserved from similar calamities. But if any thing like this should again occur, to prove the love and the faith of our hearts, delay ye not to give us tiding of it by your letters, being persuaded that all our brethren here pray that these things may not occur again, but that they will again readily and plentifully give assistance if they do."

That which stamped a Christian character on these acts of benevolence, could only be the lively feelings which here declared themselves, if these works proceeded only out of a childlike love and thankfulness towards the Redeemer, and out of brotherly love towards their companions in redemption, and if they joyfully proceeded out of the inward impulses of love. If, on the contrary, men thought to deserve something by works like these, if they bowed themselves unwillingly as it were under the yoke of a compulsory law, then the Christian character was lost, and good works, which ought to be the spontaneous fruits of faith working through love, were only forcibly wrung from a selfish spirit, not subdued through the spirit of love to the Redeemer, by a law which commanded, which threatened, and which promised,—nay, they might be the very fruits of a refined

selfishness, and afford food to the sinful parts of human nature. The old man has constantly been inclined to seek such support, and to betake himself to outward observances instead of inward holiness, and as soon as men relinquished the notion of setting the whole Christian life on the single ground of faith and confidence, they forgot that the whole life of a Christian can be nothing but the constant and increasing appropriation and application of the merits of Christ to the weakness of humanity, an increasing revelation of fellowship with Him, which constantly more and more penetrates the whole nature and ennobles it; and thus this error obtained a deep foundation. In the third century we see that just evangelical conception of benevolence, and this unevangelical one at times side by side, as in the writing which Cyprian composed in order to encourage the Christians, among many of whom brotherly love had waxed cold during a long season of earthly repose, to the exercise of this virtue. (De Opere et Eleemosynis.) Cyprian beautifully addresses a father of a family, who excused himself from the duty of benevolence, under the plea of a numerous family, in the following language[9]: —"Think not him a father to your children, who is a feeble and mortal man, but seek another father for them, even the eternal and almighty Father of all spiritual children. Let Him be the guardian and provider for your children; and the protector of them by his Divine majesty against all the evils of the world. When you bestow more care on earthly than on heavenly possessions, you are seeking to commend your children to Satan rather than to Christ; you commit a double sin, for you neglect to obtain for your children the protection of God, and you teach them to love possessions rather than Christ."

In any times of public calamity in the larger cities, the contrast was very striking between the cowardice and selfishness of the heathen, and the brotherly love and willingness of the Christians to sacrifice their own interests. We shall take a representation of this contrast from Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, who had an opportunity of observing it in the different conduct of the heathens and the Christians during a terrible pestilence in that city, in the reign of the emperor Gallienus. "That pestilence appeared to the heathen as the most dreadful of all things, as that which left them no hope; not so, however, did it seem to us, but only a peculiar and practical trial. The greater part of our

[9] [Page 205, ed. Ox. H. J. R.]

people, in the abundance of their brotherly love, did not spare themselves, and mutually attending to each other, they would visit the sick without fear, and ministering to them for the sake of Christ, they would cheerfully give up their life with them. Many died, after their care had restored others from the disease to health. The best among our brethren, some priests and deacons, and some who were celebrated among the laity, died in this manner; and such a death, the fruit of great piety and strong faith, is hardly inferior to martyrdom. Many who took the bodies of their Christian brethren into their hands and bosoms, closed their mouth and eyes, and buried them with every attention, soon followed them in death. But with the heathen matters stood quite differently; at the first symptom of sickness they drove a man from their society, they tore themselves away from their dearest connexions; they threw the half-dead into the streets, and left the dead unburied; endeavouring by all the means in their power to escape contagion, which, notwithstanding all their contrivances, it was very difficult for them to accomplish [1]."

In the same manner the Christians of Carthage let the light of their love and Christian conduct shine before the heathen in a pestilence which visited North Africa a little before, in the reign of Gallus. The heathens, out of cowardice, left the sick and the dying, the streets were full of corpses, which no man dared to bury, and avarice was the only passion which mastered the fear of death, for wicked men endeavoured to make a gain out of the misfortunes of their neighbours; and the heathens accused the Christians of being the cause of this calamity as enemies of the gods, instead of being brought by it to the consciousness of their own guilt and corruption [2]. But Cyprian required of his Church, that they should behold in this desolating pestilence a trial of their dispositions. "How necessary is it, my dearest brethren," he says to them, "that this pestilence, which appears to bring horror and destruction, should prove the consciences of men! It will determine whether the healthy will take care of the sick, whether relations bear tender love one to another, and whether masters care for their sick servants [3]." That the Christians should show a spirit of mutual love among themselves, was not

[1] Euseb. vii. 22. [This account is considerably abridged from the original. H. J. R.]

[2] Cyprian. ad Demetrian.

[3] Lib. de Mortalitate.

sufficient to satisfy a bishop who formed his notions after the model of the great Shepherd. He therefore called his Church together, and addressed them thus: "If we do good only to our own people, we do no more than publicans and heathens. But if we are the children of God, who makes his sun to shine, and his rain to descend upon the just and upon the unjust, who sheds abroad his blessings, not on his own alone, but even upon those whose thoughts are far from Him, we must show this by our actions, endeavouring to become perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect, and blessing those who curse us, and doing good to those who persecute us." Encouraged by his paternal admonition [4], the members of the Church addressed themselves to the work,—the rich contributing money, and the poor their labour, so that in a short time, the streets were cleared of the corpses which filled them, and the city saved from the dangers of an universal pestilence.

The peculiar spirit of Christianity was constantly shown in this, that in the new duties it commanded, it always preserved exactly the proper medium between the opposite dispositions, by which the natural man, according as his inclinations induce him to prefer an easy state of enjoyment, or a wild and ardent activity, is commonly led into error. It is thus no uncommon thing in human life to observe the development of two such opposite feelings, the one a cowardice which honours man more than God, and would sacrifice all divine truth, and all the dignity of human nature to the commands of earthly power, and the other a wild defiance of all existing human institutions. Christianity gave its sanction to all existing human institutions, as far as there was nothing in them which contravened the laws of God; it left its genuine professors to walk in the laws and institutions which they found existing, even where they were oppressive to them, with resignation and self-denial. The spirit of love to God, from whom as its original source all earthly power and order is derived, and for *whose* glory they felt themselves bound to submit to all the ordinances of man which are not at variance with his laws—the spirit of love to their neighbour, which endeavoured through the means of such compliance to win him for God,—these were the feelings which caused them to bear this yoke with joy; and the consciousness of freedom in the inward man,

[4] [See Pont. Vit. Cyprian. p. 5. H. J. R.]

because he belonged to heaven, taught them to see in this yoke no yoke at all; and while the fear of man can only bring eye-service, with them the looking towards Him, for whose sake they did every thing, instilled into their hearts a spirit of *conscientious obedience*, even where no human eye could see them. But then the same spirit of Christianity which taught them to obey man for the sake of God, taught them also to obey God rather than man, to sacrifice every consideration whatever, and to despise their property and their life, where human power required from them any compliance which would break the laws of God; and here it was that the Christians showed the true spirit of freedom, against which no despotism was ever able to prevail. The first section of this history has already given us an opportunity of observing the effects of the spirit of Christianity in both these respects. With these feelings, Justin Martyr says, (Apol. ii.)[5] "Taxes and customs we pay the most scrupulously of all men, to those who are appointed by you, as we were taught by him. (Matth. xxii. 21.) Hence we worship only God alone, while at the same time we serve you willingly in all other respects, because we recognise you as our human sovereign." Tertullian was able to appeal to this very circumstance, and declare, that what the state lost in the revenues of the temples by the extension of Christianity was more than counterbalanced by that which it gained in taxes and customs, if they would only compare the readiness and fairness of the Christians with the false statements, &c. which were usual in the payment of these duties[6]. The Christians were accustomed to keep the above-cited saying of our Lord (Matth. xxii. 21.) constantly in their mouth and heart, as the rule of their daily conduct, and he gives in opposition to those who used it, according to his opinion, in too wide and indefinite a sense, the following interpretation of it: "The image of Cæsar, which is on the coins, is to be given to Cæsar, and the image of God which is in man, is to be given to God; therefore thou must give the money indeed to Cæsar, but thyself to God; for what will remain to God, if all belongs to Cæsar[7]?"

The principles, according to which man must act in these respects, were easily laid down in theory, and easily to be deduced

[5] [Apol. Prim. p. 26. (ed. Thirlb. 1722.) H. J. R.]

[6] Apologet. c. 42, "Si ineatur (ratio) quantum vectigalibus pereat fraude et mendacio vestrarum professionum."

[7] Tertullian, de Idololatria, c. xv.

from Scripture, and from the nature of Christianity, and hence, as far as theory was concerned, all Christians were agreed; but the application of these principles to individual cases was a matter of greater difficulty, because this involves drawing the limits generally between that which is Cæsar's and that which is God's, and deciding what things are indifferent in a religious point of view, and what are not. The heathen religion was so closely interwoven with the whole civil and social life, that it was not always easy to separate mere civil and social things from religious affairs. Much which had originally proceeded from religious sources, had long ago lost all connexion with religious concerns with the multitude, and, becoming clear only to the learned antiquary, had lost all its religious character in the sight of the people. The question therefore arose, whether persons were justified in considering such things as indifferent in a religious point of view, and ought in them to follow the customs of the age, as merely civil and social matters, or whether they were not bound, in consequence of the connexion these customs had with heathenism, to set all other considerations aside[8].

And still further, the nature of Christianity was such, that it was certain to pass a sentence of condemnation on every thing ungodly, while at the same time, appropriating to its own purposes all that was pure in human relations and tendencies, instead of destroying them, it would sanctify and ennoble them. But then, again, the inquiry would arise, what is pure in human things, and therefore capable of being received in connexion with Christianity, and what, on the contrary, originally proceeding from the corruption of our nature, bears on its very nature the stamp of ungodliness, and therefore must be utterly rejected from Christianity? Now, inasmuch as Christianity appeared as a new leaven in an old world, and as it was destined to produce a new creation in an old one, of a totally different character and spirit, the inquiry would therefore arise the sooner, what of all that now exists in the world requires only to be reformed and ennobled, and what must be utterly destroyed. There might be a great deal really existing at that time, which, under the direction of the corrupt world, might appear utterly at variance with the

[8] We may, for instance, compare what Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, out of the treasures of their learning, following in the footsteps of heathen writers, have said of the religious meaning and reference of the ceremonies of crowning—things which certainly in common life no one would have thought of.

essentials of Christianity, but which, however, by means of a different direction and another sort of use, might be brought into perfect harmony with Christian principles. The consequence of this would of course be, that some men would condemn the good use of which things were capable, because of the misuse of them, while others would advocate the existing misuse itself, in virtue of the possible good use of them.

Many institutions also might exist, which would never have been formed in a state of society under the influence of Christianity, and which were certainly foreign to pure Christianity, but which, nevertheless, under the guidance of a Christian spirit, might be so modified and applied, that they no longer contained any thing at variance with its principles. As Christianity was not in the habit of producing any violent and convulsive changes in external things, but reformed and amended these by beginning from within, in the case of such institutions, for the avoidance of a greater evil, and in order not to step out of its own peculiar sphere of spiritual efficacy, it might very well allow them to exist, at least for a time, in such a way that a new spirit might be imparted to the old form, which did not suit the spirit of Christianity; and, at last, when men were prepared for the change, by the influence of Christianity, the form itself might drop, and *all* become new.

Under these circumstances, therefore, the application of principles, on which all were agreed, might yet cause differences among the Christians, as a difference of habits of thought and dispositions was likely to give a different colour to the relations which things around bore to them; a sort of difference, which in after-times often occurred again in the case of missions among strange people, in the organization of new Churches, and in the decisions which at various times were made about matters of indifference (ἀδιαφορα). An error might here be committed on one side or the other, either by too lax accommodation or by too abrupt rejection. With the exception of those few, who having already made a further progress in genuine evangelical freedom, had united enlightened considerateness with the depth of Christian zeal, the latter error was more prevalent than the former among real Christians; they were more inclined to cast away much of that which, in the days of heathenism, they had used to the service of sin or of falsehood, but which was still capable of a very different use, than to retain any thing which had the slightest

savour of heathen corruption; they were eager to cast away every thing which came before them in contact with sin or heathenism; they were inclined to do too much, far rather than to nullify even the smallest portion of Christianity, that jewel, that pearl for which they were ready to sell every thing; and this was natural enough, for in the first warmth of genuine conversion, in the first fire of real love, man is more inclined to reject with abruptness all that belongs to the world, than to err by retaining it in a lax spirit of accommodation. One of these two parties appealed to the saying of our Saviour, that we must render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, to show, that in all which relates to civil order, men must obey the existing laws, and give no useless offence to the heathen, and besides, must not give them occasion to speak injuriously of God, and in short, that they must "become all things to all men," in order to win them *all* to the Gospel. The other party could not deny that these principles were deduced from Scripture; but then, said they, while we consider all external and earthly things as belonging to Cæsar, our whole heart and life still must belong to God: that which is Cæsar's must not come into competition with that which is God's. If it be unconditionally true that we must give the heathen no opportunity whatever of calumniating the name of Christian, we must give up all Christianity. Let them calumniate us for ever, provided we give them no opportunity of doing so by unchristian conduct; let them continue to calumniate us, if they only abuse what is truly Christian in us. In the proper sense, we are willing "to become all things to all men," but not if we are expected to become worldly to the worldly; for we have it written, "if I please men, I am not the servant of Christ[9]." It is easy to see that both these parties were right in the principles which they laid down, but the only question was, how to apply these principles justly.

Those who exercised trades contrary to the general and recognised principles of Christianity, were not admitted to baptism, before they had pledged themselves to relinquish them[1]. They were obliged to begin a new trade, in order to obtain a livelihood,

[9] Tertullian, de Idololatria.

[1] Apostol. Constitut. lib. viii. c. 31. The council of Elvira also, can. 62. "Si auriga et pantomimus credere voluerint, placuit, ut prius actibus suis renuntient et tunc demum suscipiantur, ita ut ulterius ad ea non revertantur. Qui si facere contra interdictum tentaverint, projiciantur ab ecclesia."

or in case they were unable to do so, they were received into the number of the poor of the Church. Among these trades were reckoned all which had the smallest connexion of any kind whatever with idolatry, and might contribute to its furtherance, as those of artists and workmen, who employed themselves in making or adorning images of the gods. Many who wished to continue these trades, as a means of subsistence, excused themselves under the plea, that they were no worshippers of idols, and that they considered these images not as objects of religion, but as mere objects of art; but in those days it must have argued great lukewarmness in religious feeling, to separate religion and art so sophistically. Tertullian, on the contrary, declares with pious warmth, "And yet most assuredly, to obtain honour for idols, is to honour them yourself; you bring no offering, indeed, of any thing else to them, but you offer up your own spirit to them—your sweat is their drink-offering, and you light the torch of your cunning in honour of them[1]." Among these unlawful callings were also reckoned all kinds of astrology and magical arts, then such prevailing and profitable sources of delusion and deceit.

The cruel pleasure which the Roman people received from the sanguinary shows of gladiators, gives a remarkable proof how completely the moral and humane feelings of our nature may be repressed by education and habit, and how a narrow-hearted political sentiment may destroy the common sentiments of humanity. This was a pleasure which those who aspired to the character of civilization scrupled not to partake in, which lawgivers and statesmen, and even those who claimed the name of philosophers, were not ashamed to approve of, and promote. The feelings, however, of universal love and charity, first called into life and action by Christianity, must, from its earliest rise, have struggled against this species of cruelty, which the laws and the prevailing sentiments of the Romans allowed and approved. Those who attended the combats of gladiators and of wild beasts, according to the principle which the Church established, were excommunicated. Irenæus, with horror, calls it the extremest denial of the Christian character, when some among the wild, fanatical, and antinomian sect of the Gnostics

[1] Tertull. de Idololat. c. vi.

would not even refrain from participating in those bloody shows, the objects of hatred at once to God and man[3]. While Cyprian is proclaiming the joy of a Christian, in feeling that he has departed from the corruptions of the heathen world, and while he is looking on these from a Christian's point of view, he says[4], "If you cast your eyes upon the towns, you meet with an assembly which is more frightful than solitude. A combat of gladiators is in preparation, in order to gratify the thirst of cruel eyes with blood. A man is put to death for the pleasure of men, murder becomes a profession, and crime not only practised, but even taught." Tertullian says to the heathen[5], who defended the shows of gladiators, and in their defence alleged, that those who were capitally guilty were often made use of in these combats, "who but a criminal can deny that it is well criminals should be punished? and yet the innocent can never rejoice in the punishment of his neighbour; nay, it rather becomes the innocent to lament, when a man, his fellow-creature, is so guilty, that he requires so cruel a mode of execution. But who will give me any security that only the guilty are ever thrown to wild beasts, or condemned to any other capital punishment, and that innocence never suffers this mode of death, from the love of vengeance in a judge, from the weakness of its advocate, or from the power of torture? . . . . But at any rate the gladiators come to the combat uncharged with any guilt, but solely to become the victims of a public passion. And as to those who are sentenced to these combats, is it proper that the punishment, which ought to serve as a means of amendment to men guilty of a venial transgression, should expressly lead them to become murderers?"

But it was not the participation in these cruel amusements alone, which appeared to the Christians incompatible with the nature of their calling, but this condemnation extended also to every kind of spectacle exhibited in those days, to the pantomimic shows, the tragedies, and comedies, the chariot and foot races, in short, to all the amusements of the theatre and the circus. As the Romans of those days were passionately addicted to theatrical entertainments, it was no uncommon mark by which a man's

[3] Irenæus, lib. i. ch. vi. Ὡς μηδε της παρα Θεῳ και ἀνθρωποις μεμισημενης της των θηριομαχων και μονομαχιας ἀνδροφονου θεας ἀπεχεσθαι ἑνιους αὐτων.

[4] Ep. ad Donat.

[5] De Spectaculis, c. xix.

conversion to Christianity was ascertained, that he wholly withdrew from the theatre[6]. Theatrical exhibitions were supposed part and parcel of idolatry, inasmuch as they derived their origin from the heathen worship, and were still connected with many of the heathen festivals. These exhibitions were especially included in the pomps of idolatry and Satan, (the πομπη διαβολου,) which Christians were bound at their baptism to renounce, by the pledge which they took upon themselves at their entrance into the rank of soldiers of the kingdom of God—(the sacramentum militiæ Christi). In many of them much took place which violated the moral feelings and decencies of Christians, and even where this was not the case, yet even then the hour-long pursuit of idle and vain objects—the unholy spirit which reigned in these assemblies—the wild uproar of the collected multitude, seemed hardly to suit the holy seriousness of the Christian's priestly character. The Christians considered themselves as priests, consecrated to God for their whole life, as temples of the Holy Ghost; all therefore which was foreign to that Spirit, whose dwelling-place in their hearts they were bound to keep ready for him, was to be kept far away from them. "God hath commanded," says Tertullian, de Spectaculis, c. xv.[7] "that the Holy Spirit, a Spirit essentially tender and kind, should be received with tranquillity and gentleness, with peace and stillness, and not be disquieted by passion, rage, anger, and the violence of irritated feelings. How can such a Spirit put up with the exhibitions of the playhouse? For no play goes off without violent commotion of the minds of the spectators. . . . No one, in the theatre, thinks of any thing else than to see and to be seen. Amidst the clamour of the players can any man think upon the promise of a prophet, or meditate upon a Psalm during the melodious strains of an eunuch? . . . . Now, since with us all immodesty is an object of horror, how can we dare there to listen to things which we dare not speak, while we know that all useless and trifling discourse is condemned by the Lord?" Matt. xii. 36; Ephes. iv. 29; v. 4. So constantly had the Christians in their judgment on all their relations in life, the pattern of the Divine word and the nature of their Christian calling before their eyes!

To Tertullian, who was, no doubt, inclined to behold in every

[6] Tertullian, de Spectaculis, c. xxiv. "Hinc vel maxime ethnici intelligunt factum Christianum de repudio spectaculorum."

[7] [Part of this passage is in c. xvii. and part in c. xxv.—H. J. R.]

kind of art a lie which counterfeited the original nature created by God, the whole system of plays appeared an art of mere representation and lies: "The Creator of truth"—says he, l. c. ch. xxiii.—"loves nothing false, with him all fiction is falsehood; he who condemns all hypocrisy, will never approve of any man, who counterfeits voice, sex, age, love, hatred, sighs, and tears."

When persons of weak minds, who thought really that it was unchristian to frequent the theatres, yet suffered themselves to be carried away by the prevailing manners, and frequent them; things would sometimes occur to them there, which inflicted a deep wound on their Christian feelings, produced remorse of conscience in them, and destroyed their peace of mind, in a manner which long continued to be prejudicial to them [8]. Others, after they had once or twice, against the voice of their Christian conscience, suffered the love of pleasure to bring them to the theatre, again took a liking for these things [9], and by their passion for theatrical amusements, they were again by degrees drawn back into the vortex of heathenism.

The heathens and Christians of a light and trivial disposition were in the habit of urging on the more serious the following arguments: Why should they withdraw from these public pleasures? Such outward pleasures of the eye and ear need not banish religion from the heart. God would not be injured by the pleasures of men, and to enjoy these, in their proper place and season, without any violation of the fear or the reverence due to God, could be no crime [1]. So Celsus, when he challenges the Christians to partake in the public festivals, says to them, "God is the common God of all, he is good and without wants, and free from jealousy. What then should prevent those who are so especially consecrated to him from partaking in the public festi-

[8] Tertullian gives us some examples, l. c. ch. xxvi. A woman, who went to the theatre, returned home from it in the miserable condition of a person possessed by an evil spirit; and when it was attempted to exorcise the spirit, and he was asked how he dared to take possession of the soul of a believer, he said, or the sick person, who imagined that he was speaking in the name of the evil spirit, said, "I was quite justified in what I did, I seized upon her while she was in a place where my dominion lies." Another, after visiting the theatre, saw a fearful vision in the night, and it was perhaps in consequence of the alarm into which she was thrown by it, that she died five days afterwards.

[9] Tertullian, de Spectaculis, ch. xxvi. "Quot documenta de his, qui cum diabolo apud spectacula communicando a Domino exciderunt!"

[1] Tertull. l. c. ch. i.

vals[2]?" This is quite in accordance with the usual ways of levity and a cold-hearted love of the world, which, in opposing itself to moral seriousness of a high order, generally puts on a most imposing air of philosophy. Tertullian gives the following answer: "But it is then our business to show, how these pleasures cannot possibly consist with true religion and true obedience towards the true God."

Another argument, by which some who were devoted to amusements endeavoured to silence their Christian conscience, was the following: that in these exhibitions only such things were made use of as belonged to the gifts of God, which he had bestowed on man in order that man might enjoy them. No place either of Holy Writ could be alleged, in which plays were expressly forbidden. In regard to chariot races, the riding in chariots could have nothing sinful in it, for Elijah was taken to heaven in a chariot. Music and dancing in the theatre could not be forbidden, for we read in Scripture of choirs, of stringed instruments, of cymbals, horns, and trumpets; we read of king David's dancing and playing before the ark of the covenant, (1 Chron. xvi. 29.) and we find the apostle Paul borrowing for the exhortation of Christians, similes from the gymnastic games and the circus[3]. Ephes. vi. 13; 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8; Philipp. iii. 14. Tertullian, in reply to this sophistry, says, "Oh! how acute in argument does human ignorance fancy itself, especially when it is afraid of losing some of the pleasures and enjoyments of the world." Against the first argument he says, "Assuredly all things are the gift of God; but then the question is, to what purpose were they given? and how may they be used in subservience to their original destination? what is the original creation of them, and what their sinful abuse? for there is a wide difference between the original purity of nature and its corruption, between the creator and perverter of it." Against the second he says, "Although no express, verbal prohibition of games and shows is found in Scripture, yet it contains general principles, from which this prohibition follows as a matter of course. All which is said in general terms against the lust of the flesh and of the eyes, must be applicable also to this particular kind of lust. If we can conclude that

[2] Origen, c. Cels. Lib. viii. c. 21. Ὁ γε μην Θεος ἁπασι κοινος, ἀγαθος τε και ἀπροσδεης, και ἐξω φθονου. Τι οὐν κωλυει τους μαλιστα καθωσιωμενους αὐτῳ και των δημοτελων ἑορτων μεταλαμβανειν;

[3] The treatise "de Spectaculis" in Cyprian's works.

rage, and cruelty, and wrath are permitted to us in Scripture, we are certainly at liberty to visit the amphitheatre. Are we such as we call ourselves, and shall we delight ourselves in witnessing the shedding of human blood?" Against those who perverted Scripture in the manner above-mentioned, the author of the treatise "De Spectaculis" in Cyprian's writings uses the following language: "I may safely affirm that it were better for such men never to know the Scriptures, than so to read them, for the words and examples, placed there to exhort to the virtues of the Gospel, they pervert to the defence of vices; for this was written to awaken our zeal in things of real importance by the consideration, that the heathen show such great zeal and eagerness in trivial things. . . . Reason of itself may deduce from the propositions laid down in Scripture those consequences, which are not themselves expressly unfolded[4]. Let every man take counsel of his own heart, and commune with the person he professes to be as a Christian, and he will never do anything unbecoming to him, for the conscience, which binds itself to none but itself, will always have the most weight[5]."

Tertullian calls upon the Christians to compare the real spiritual pleasures, which their faith gave them to enjoy, with those false pleasures of the heathen world (Chap. xxix.): "Tell me then, what else is our desire, than that which was also the wish of the apostle, to depart out of the world and to be with the Lord. There is thy pleasure, whither thy wishes ascend. . . . Canst thou be so unthankful, that thou art not satisfied with the many and great pleasures which the Lord hath already bestowed upon thee, and acknowledgest them not? For what is a subject of higher rejoicing than reconciliation with God, thy Father and Lord, than the revelation of truth, the knowledge of error, and the remission of so many sins already committed? What can be a greater pleasure than the contempt of such pleasures, and the contempt of the whole world; or than true freedom, a pure conscience, and a guiltless life? what pleasure greater than not to fear death, and to feel that thou mayest trample the idols of the heathen to the dust, mayest cast out evil spirits, heal sicknesses, and pray for revelations[6]? These are the pleasures, these the

[4] Ratio docet, quæ Scriptura conticuit.

[5] Unusquisque cum persona professionis suæ loquatur et nihil unquam indecorum geret. Plus enim ponderis habebit conscientia, quæ nulli se alteri debebit, nisi sibi.

[6] In this enumeration, which in its high tone of conscience and feeling, speaks the Christian sentiments of these early ages of Christianity, we may, besides the

games of the Christian, holy and eternal, and such as no man can buy with money. . . . . And what too are those of which it is said, that no eye hath seen them, no ear heard them, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them?" The author also of the work we have cited as found in the writings of Cyprian, says—"He can never look with wonder on the works of man, who hath reckoned himself a child of God. He falls down from his high and noble pre-eminence, who looks with wonder at any thing but the Lord. Let the believing Christian give all his diligence to the holy Scriptures, and there he will find the shows of faith, shows worthy to be looked upon, and shows such as he who has lost his eyesight may delight in."

When Christians renounced even being *present* at the representation of these games and plays, the trade of an actor must of course, *à fortiori*, have been forbidden to them. In the time of Cyprian the case had occurred in the North African Church, that a player, although a Christian, wished to procure his living by instructing boys in the art which he himself had formerly practised. The bishop Cyprian was asked in consequence whether such a person could be suffered to belong to the community, and he expressed himself most strongly against it: "Since it is forbidden, in Deut. xxii. 5, to a man to dress himself in woman's clothes, and a curse is declared against any one who does this[7], how far more wicked must it seem to make a man act the part of a woman thus immodestly, to put on indecent gestures, and to falsify God's creatures by the arts of the devil?"—"Suppose such an one," continues Cyprian, "should bring forward the pretext of poverty, his necessity may be relieved, among the rest whom the Church maintains, provided he will content himself with a more

general Christian spirit which pervades it, remark the characteristic spirit of Tertullian—a spirit which was constantly inclined to place too great stress on individual and striking gifts of grace, and too little to regard what is said in St. Luke x. 20, and 1 Cor. xiii. 1.

[7] It was, however, it must be remarked, no uncommon error in these days for men to cite isolated passages of the Old Testament, a work in which religious and political regulations are so closely interwoven, and apply them immediately and unconditionally to the Christian Church, without inquiring whether they suited the peculiar temper and nature of the economy of the New Testament, without inquiring, for instance, whether they belonged to that eternal law, which was not to be destroyed but fulfilled by the Gospel. Although, however, the particular law here mentioned no longer existed as a *positive ordinance* in the economy of the New Testament, yet it is easy to perceive that the *moral* ground of the prohibition still continued, and therefore the law might still be appealed to and put in force anew.

moderate way of life indeed, but an innocent one. He must not, however, imagine that his ceasing to sin should be bought of him at a price, because he does this, not for our sake, but for his own. . . . . If the Church, where he live, is too poor to maintain him, let him come to Carthage; here he may receive what is needful for him for meat and raiment, in order that he may not teach others, who are without the pale of the Church, what is criminal, but may himself learn in the Church that which is salutary[8]."

Among the circumstances foreign to its nature, which Christianity found established at its first propagation, was the existence of slavery. As the natural man, in whom selfishness is the leading principle, impresses on every thing which is the offspring of man's natural condition, his own peculiar stamp and character, as even the brightest feelings of man's nobler nature are tarnished and stained by this defect, (selfishness,) so we find its traces even in the political spirit of freedom among the ancients, although, perhaps, the marks of the original worth of man's nature might shine through this spirit. It does, however, itself bear the stamp of that selfishness, by which every thing, which does not spring out of man's regenerate nature, is debased. The zealous friends of freedom robbed a large portion of their fellow-men of that which they thought the greatest of blessings, they deprived them of all enjoyment of those rights, for the possession of which, in regard to themselves, they were so jealous and anxious; and the bitterest enemies of slavery were perfectly contented to dwell surrounded by thousands of their fellow-creatures, who served them as slaves. Their zeal for freedom, which ought to be the common possession of all men created in God's image, limited itself entirely within the narrow confines of their native country; they knew of the rights of freedom only as the rights of citizens, and not as the universal rights of man; and much as the condition of slaves was often mitigated by civilization and morals, yet they were always in many respects treated not as men, but as things. In a judicial investigation all the cruelties of torture might be used upon an *innocent* slave; and if a master had been murdered by one of his slaves, according to the Roman law, an hundred of the slaves who were in his service, although their innocence was as clear as day, were executed with the murderer. Christianity first prepared an entire change in these circumstances, because it taught the

[8] Ep. vi. ad Eucrat. [Ep. lxi. Ed. Pam. ii. ed. Ox.]

originally equal rights, and the originally equal destinies of all men created in the image of God, and because it represented God as the Father, and Christ as the Redeemer of *all* mankind, and every individual as an immediate object of God's providential care. Masters, as well as slaves, were obliged to acknowledge themselves the slaves of sin, and all alike to receive their deliverance from the slavery of sin, *the true, the highest freedom*, as the gift of God's free grace. Servants and masters, by becoming believers, were mutually bound together in the same bond of an heavenly union, destined for immortality. They became brethren in Christ—with whom there is neither bondsman nor freeman —they became members of one body, made to drink of one Spirit, and heirs of the same heavenly possessions. Servants often became the instructors of their masters in the Gospel, after they had caused the light of their faith to shine before them in their narrow earthly sphere[9]; and masters saw in their servants no longer their servants, but their beloved brethren; they prayed and sang together, and would sit down together at the feasts of brotherly love, and together receive the body of the Lord. And besides, by the very spirit and practice of Christianity, such ideas and feelings were naturally engendered, as were utterly inconsistent with this institution of slavery, however well it might correspond to the then established notions. Christianity would necessarily introduce a wish that all men should be placed in those circumstances, in which they would be the least hindered in the free and independent use of their spiritual and moral powers according to the will of God: and thus St. Paul says to the servant, (1 Cor. vii. 21.) "If thou mayest be made free, use it rather." Nevertheless, Christianity never began by external changes and alterations: for these, wherever they did not begin from the inward man, and there fix their first and firm foundation, would always have failed in their salutary designs. The new creation, which it produced, was in all respects an inward one, from which all outward effects, in their whole compass and extent, were to flow, at first by degrees, and therefore,

[9] The example of Onesimus was often repeated. Tertullian appeals to cases where a master, who having patiently put up with the former crimes of a servant, when he found him quite reformed, but at the same time heard that this reformation was owing to Christianity, sent him to the house of correction, out of pure hatred to Christianity. Apologet. c. iii. "Servum jam fidelem dominus olim mitis ab oculis relegavit."

with more certainty and greater benefit. It left external relations to exist for a time as they were, but by infusing into them a new spirit, it prepared their complete reformation, by its internal effects on men's minds. It first gave to the slave that true and inward freedom, without which all earthly and bodily freedom is but a name, and which, wherever it exists, no earthly bond, no earthly yoke, can overwhelm and subdue. St. Paul says, "He that is called in the Lord, while he is a servant, is the Lord's freeman." Tertullian, in showing how far exalted this heavenly freedom is above the earthly, says[1], "In the world, those who have received their freedom, are crowned. But thy freedom has already been bought by Christ, and bought, too, very dear. How can the world give freedom to him, who is already the servant of another? All in the world is appearance only, and nothing reality. For then thou wast free in regard to men, as one bought by Christ; and now thou art a servant of Christ, although set free by a man. If thou dost esteem the freedom which the world can give thee a real freedom, thou art again become by this a slave to men, and hast lost the freedom bestowed on thee by Christ, because thou esteemest it a slavery." One of the imperial slaves, named Euelpistus, being conducted before the tribunal with Justin Martyr and other Christians, spoke thus: "I also am a Christian, and I have received freedom through Christ, and through his grace I partake in the same hope[2]." The servant was to turn his state of service into freedom by serving his master, for the sake of God, with a free heart and spirit—by recognising in his spirit God alone as his master, who placed him in this state, and by keeping Him before his eyes—by seeking, with a faithful heart, the advantage of his earthly master, rendering him due service and obedience, without the fear of man, in all things which did not contravene the laws of God, and ceasing to obey him, where the commands of men were against the laws of God. If an earthly condition, which suited his destination as a man, and his calling as a Christian, better were offered to a Christian, he was to accept it with joy. St. Paul says, "Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it, but *if thou mayest be made free, use it rather*." But if this choice were not given to him, the Christian was not to boast of his rights, or lift himself up, as a Christian, above his heathen master, but in the spirit of self-

[1] De Corona Militis, c. xiii. [2] Acta Mart. Justini.

sacrificing love, of humility, and self-denial, which animated him, he was to let the light of his Christianity shine before his earthly master, that he might win him for the common Lord and Master of all in heaven. Irenæus, bishop of Antioch, writes thus to Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (ch. iv.): "Be not proud towards servants and maidens, but at the same time they must not exalt themselves, but serve with more zeal to the honour of God, that they may receive that higher freedom at the hands of God. They must not expect their freedom to be bought by the Church, lest they should be found the servants of their own lusts."

Another question, on which men's opinions were divided, was this: Whether a Christian could conscientiously accept a magisterial or a military office, and especially with regard to the latter. As the heathen state-religion was so closely interwoven with all the relations of political and social life, all such offices would be likely to produce cases, in which a man could not avoid partaking in the ceremonies of the heathen religion. All Christians, on this view of the question, proclaimed with one voice, that no necessity could ever excuse this. In this respect, what Tertullian says is certainly spoken from the hearts of all Christians: "Christ never changes. There is one Gospel and one Jesus, who will deny all who deny Him, and confess all who confess God; with Him the believing citizen (paganus) is a soldier of the Lord, and the soldier has the same duties to perform as the citizen[3]."

But *the question*, whether a Christian, supposing his faith not compromised, was at liberty to accept such an office, was quite a distinct one, and was answered in the affirmative by one party, and in the negative by another. The question must be carefully considered, with a due regard to the circumstances in which the Church was then placed. The prevailing idea of the Christian life was this: to follow a Redeemer, who had entered the world in poverty and low estate, and had hidden his glory under the form of a servant—to follow Him in humility, in self-

[3] De Corona Militis, c. xi. "Apud hunc tam miles est, paganus fidelis, quam paganus, miles infidelis." I have here translated as if the reading were "fidelis," for which emendation, what Tertullian had before said of "fides pagana," gives some authority. The common reading may, however, be taken in the following sense: "The faithless soldier, he who violates the duties of Christian fidelity, is to him as a 'paganus' in regard to his militia; he is one excluded from the order of the 'milites Christi,' the duties of which he has violated."

denial, and in renunciation of every thing earthly. The Christian's glory was in heaven with his Saviour; in his earthly appearance, that which was utterly devoid of authority and splendour, and most like the appearance of his Saviour, was most befitting. He despised the power and the glory of this world, while he felt himself exalted by the consciousness of partaking in the power and glory of a far different one. But then this renunciation of earthly things consisted in the state of the mind, and the affections of this might remain the same under outward circumstances of very different complexions; and the *outward* possession of earthly property, and of earthly splendour, when a man's condition and circumstances required it, and the use of earthly power and might in an earthly calling, was not necessarily prohibited; all this might and ought to be sanctified by means of Christianity. But it was natural that the Christians, in the first warmth of their conversion, should not make these distinctions between *outward* and *inward*, and that they should be inclined to conceive in an outward manner the necessity of imitating a Lord, who had appeared in the form of a servant; it was natural, that in their first ardour they should willingly cast away from them all those earthly things, which they saw serving the purposes of heathen corruption, and reject earthly might and glory, which they saw so often opposed to the will of God[4]. Under this point of view Tertullian says (de Idololatria, c. xviii.): "Thou, as a Christian, must follow the model of thy Lord; he, the Lord, came in humility and low estate; he was without any fixed habitation; 'for the Son of man,' says he, 'hath not where to lay his head:' he came clad in the garb of poverty, for otherwise he would not have said, 'Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses,' and he came without beauty or comeliness of appearance, as Isaiah foretold. (ch. liii.) If he would not even once exercise the rights of dominion over his own, for whom he performed the most menial service, if he, fully conscious as he was of his regal power, yet shrunk from being made a king, he gave a perfect example to all his disciples, to avoid all which is high and glorious in earthly rank and power. For who had a better title to make use of these things than the Son of God?

[4] Hence, the heathen in Minucius Felix, c. viii. describes the Christians as men who, while they were themselves half naked, despised honours and purple robes. "Honores et purpuras despiciunt ipsi seminudi."

What fasces, and how many of them, would he have made to precede him! what purple would have flowed from his shoulders! what gold would have gleamed from his head! had he not declared that the glory of the world benefited neither him nor his. He condemned also that which he rejected[5]."

Many Christians also imagined, with a conscientiousness which, abstractedly considered, always deserves our admiration, that passages like Matt. v. 39, were to be interpreted literally. This arose from not considering that the passages in question chiefly related to the disposition of the heart, and that their object was to banish all thirst for revenge from *the hearts* of men, so that love alone might reign there, although even love itself is often obliged to inflict pain, for a season, on the very objects whose real advantage it is seeking. Their Christian feelings would not allow them to suffer themselves to become the instrument of another's pain, and to assist in the execution of *the law*, where a spirit of severe justice, to the exclusion of the spirit of mercy and love, was the leading and the animating principle[6].

Christians, under the then existing circumstances, were generally accustomed to consider the state as a power hostile to the Church, and it was far from their imagination to conceive it possible that Christianity should appropriate to itself also the relations and offices of the state[7]. The Christians stood aloof and distinct from the state, as a priestly and spiritual race, and Christianity seemed able to influence civil life only in that manner which, it must be confessed, is the purest, by practically endeavouring to instil more and more of holy feeling into the citizens of the state. When Celsus required that the Christians should

[5] (Gloriam seculi) "quam damnavit in pompa diaboli deputavit." These are the words of Tertullian, one of the most violent advocates of these opinions, it must be confessed, and a writer with whom they appear carried to the very extreme, as well as every thing else, which seized upon his mind and animated him.

[6] Tertullian, in treating on this subject, first separates those cases in which a Christian cannot, under any circumstances, administer a magisterial office. "Jam vero quæ sunt potestatis, neque judicet de capite alicujus vel pudore, feras enim de pecunia, neminem vinciat, neminem recludat aut torqueat, si hæc credibile est fieri posse." The Council of Elvira, canon 56, ordained, that no magistrate should be allowed to visit the Church during any year in which he had to preside as Decemvir over cases of life and death.

[7] How little Tertullian imagined that the emperors themselves would ever be Christians, may be judged of from the following expressions, Apologet. c. xxi. "Sed et Cæsares credidissent super Christo, si aut Cæsares non essent sæculo necessarii aut si et Christiani potuissent esse Cæsares."

take up arms for the protection of the rights of the emperor, and fight in his armies, Origen answered, "We do, in fact, render the emperor Divine assistance, by putting on the Divine armour, in which we follow the command of the apostle, 1 Tim. ii. 1. And the more pious any man is, the more able is he to render the emperor a more effectual assistance than the ordinary soldiers. We may also use the following argument with the heathen: 'Your priests keep their hands pure, that they may be able to offer the accustomed sacrifices to the gods, with hands unstained with blood, and you do not compel your priests, even in times of war and difficulty, to take the field. Their duty is, as priests of God, to combat by prayer for those who are waging a just war, and for the lawful emperor, in order that all which opposes those that have right on their side may be annihilated. The Christians render greater service to their country than other men, inasmuch as they instruct the citizens, and teach them to become pious towards God, on whom the welfare of cities depends, and who receives those whose conduct in a poor and miserable city has been good, into a divine and heavenly city[8]." When Celsus argued that the Christians ought to undertake the duties of the magistracy in their native country, Origen replied, "But we know that in every city we have another country, whose foundations are in the word of God, and we require it from those who are competent by their talents and pious lives, to take upon themselves the offices requisite for the maintenance of order in the Churches."

[8] A few critical remarks are necessary to establish the propriety of the translation here given of this passage, which is taken from the eighth Book of Origen, against Celsus. In the words of Origen the reading εἰς τον πολιεα θεον appears to be the genuine, and εἰς τον των ὁλων θεον a false reading. It is easy to understand how the predicate contained in the former reading, which is very unusual in a Christian's mouth, should be changed into the latter, which is common enough; but a change "vice versa" is difficult to be accounted for. There is, however, nothing to startle us in Origen, even from a Christian point of view, calling God πολιευς, as a comparison with Ζευς πολιευς was before his eyes. The word πολις, so often repeated in this passage, speaks for this play on words. If we take this reading, the play on words further makes it probable that we ought to read ἀναλαμβανοντα instead of ἀναλαμβανοντες.

[This passage is considerably abridged from the original; it appears to me that this abridgment has slightly altered the turn of the passage in one sentence, although the general sense is adhered to. I mean the passage beginning, "Their duty," which I have translated from the German and not from the Greek. In the original this sentence appears to me to apply to the Christians, not to the heathen priests. The passage is taken from B. viii. ch. 73, 74. ed. De la Rue. H. J. R.]

Those, on the contrary, who determined that it was allowable for a Christian to accept civil and military offices, supported their opinion by examples out of the Old Testament. A just and obvious answer in this case was, that we are not at liberty to conclude that every thing, which was consonant to the nature of the dispensation of the Old Testament, would also suit the nature of that of the New[9]. Even when it was advanced, that John the Baptist had not commanded the soldiers, who came to him, to give up their profession, but had prescribed rules for them to practise it in a manner agreeable to God, it might be alleged in reply, that John had stood only on the limit between the old and the new dispensation. But when they appealed to the case of the centurion, whose faith Christ himself had praised, (Luke vii.) and of the believing Cornelius, their adversaries had more reason to acknowledge the weight of their appeal, and even Tertullian himself, the warm opponent of the profession of arms among Christians, did not feel himself authorized altogether to condemn those who, having become Christians while they were soldiers, continued in their old profession, provided it was unattended with any thing which caused them to violate their fidelity as Christians[1]. Many also argued against the propriety of Christians becoming soldiers, from Matt. xxvi. 52, considering that when our Saviour commanded Peter to put the sword into the sheath, He had given the same command to all Christians[2], although this passage, when taken with the context, can be considered as opposed only to an *unauthorized* taking up of arms, and as meant to reprove the self-willed spirit of man, which is desirous of furthering by means of outward might the cause of God, which God alone is capable of conducting by his word and Spirit.

Christianity was destined by its peculiar nature to conduct human life between two extremes, a vain devotion to the world, and a gloomy and proud contempt of it. The centre and the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the doctrine of redemption, here also stamped its peculiar spirit and character upon the Christian life. The redeemed no longer belonged to himself, but

[9] Tertullian, de Idololatria, c. xviii. "Scito non semper comparanda esse vetera et nova, rudia et polita, cœpta et applicita, servilia et liberalia."

[1] Tertull. de Corona Militis, c. xi.

[2] Tertullian, de Idololatria, c. xix. "Omnem postea militem Dominus in Petro exarmando discinxit."

to his Redeemer: in his inward life he had departed out of the world, as far as the world is opposed to the kingdom of God, and his conversation was to be in heaven. His *whole life* must, therefore, receive a new complexion; it was to be a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the grace of redemption, and consecrated to God under the influence of the Redeemer's Spirit. With these feelings was the Christian bound to use and to enjoy every thing he did enjoy, and these feelings were to sanctify all the ways and all the pleasures of the citizen of heaven, while his fleshly abode was still in the world. Among the heathen, the feeling which stood contrasted with a reckless enjoyment of all that youth and freshness can find to gratify their desires, was a mournful acknowledgment of the fleeting nature of the world,—that melancholy, which having found the nothingness of all on earth, abandons itself to despair, or sinks into cold resignation, and flies enjoyments so deceitful, and a world whose false pleasures are so seducing and delusive, with lofty contempt; or with the despair of one who, having found that all below is fleeting and false, has nothing real and abiding, wherewith to replace it. On the one hand, a lawless life of wild and reckless enjoyment;—on the other, a life under the burden of the law, where the law has evoked the consciousness of guilt, and man, pursued by the feeling of impurity and guilt, carries this feeling into every thing around him, a life where to the impure all things are impure! To one in this state, all nature appeared unclean, all its enjoyments defiling, and sense and matter the seat of evil. On the one hand, stood the spirit of polytheism, deifying all the powers of nature, and, under their influence, with fresh and vigorous feelings abandoning itself to all the pleasures which the natural life is capable of deriving from individual objects;—on the other, the dark, proud spirit of pantheism, despising all that is individual, together with all the energies and pleasures which are derived from it, as mere false appearances, as a delusion which carries man away captive, and as a narrow limit which cramps his views,—a spirit which only sought by serious abstract contemplation to unite itself with that one substantive Being, which hides itself under the deceitful guise of these individualities. The first was certainly the prevailing spirit in the Roman and Grecian heathenism; but, nevertheless, as the youthful life of the old world was daily waning away, as every thing grew old and died, the latter spirit constantly gained ground; and besides this, during these times of powerful

spiritual excitement, and lively intercourse between the Western world and the distant East, the theosophic and ascetic spirit of the latter had extended itself also widely over the West. Christianity, on the contrary, universally raised up a new life out of death, and only killed, in order that a nobler life might have power to rise up. As soon as it had brought man to the consciousness, that the source of evil and impurity was not without, that it was not to be sought in nature, or in sense and matter, but in his own inward heart, in sin; that to the impure all things are impure, and to the pure all things are pure; and as soon as it had freed him from this oppressive consciousness of guilt and uncleanness, by faith in the Redeemer, it restored to him the universal range of nature, as a purified and ennobled temple of God, where the redeemed must glorify his God. The fruits of the Spirit, of which St. Paul speaks, are not a dark and haughty moodiness, but love, joy, and friendship. It is joy in the Holy Spirit, to which he appeals so often, as the characteristic of the Christian life.

As Christianity opposed a thoughtless thirst for pleasure with a holy seriousness, so also it opposed to that ascetic self-righteousness, that dark and proud contempt of the world, the spirit of humility and the childlike feeling of delight in the grace of our heavenly Father, which receives with thankfulness all his gifts, even those of an earthly nature, as tokens of eternal love. The Christian was not to escape out of this corrupted world, but he received a call, by means of the Spirit which animated him, as a light, as salt, and as leaven, to contribute his share towards the general renovation of human nature, and of the human race.

It was, we must avow, natural enough, that to the heathen, who delighted in the pleasures of the world, Christianity should seem a gloomy and dark religion, and Christians appear as a race of men who abhorred the light, and, having utterly died to the world, were no longer useful in it[3]. (See above, p. 86.) But

[3] In Minucius Felix, c. 8, the heathen calls the Christians "latebrosa et lucifuga natio;" and certainly among the heathen, the frivolous man of pleasure, or the man of the world, who was accustomed to comply on the easiest terms with the demands of religion, and thought a few outward ceremonies and a few good works were amply sufficient, must have thought Christianity a kind of pietism, a religion carried to excess, "immodica superstitio, nimium pietatis." In a monumental inscription at Lyons, quoted by Gilbert Burnet in the first of his letters, a heathen husband says of his Christian wife, that she had become impious by becoming too pious, "quæ dum nimia pia fuit, facta est impia."

Tertullian thus answers these accusations against the Christians, Apologet. c. xliii. "How can such an accusation lie against those who live among you, who share the same fare with you, and the same clothing, and have the same common wants of life? For we are no Brahmins, nor Indian Gymnosophists; we are no dwellers in the woods, no men who have left the common haunts of life; we feel deeply the gratitude we owe to God, our Lord and Creator; we despise not the enjoyment of any of his works; we only desire to moderate this enjoyment in such a manner, that we may avoid excess and misuse. We therefore inhabit this world in common with you, and we make use of baths, of shops, workshops, and fairs, and all that is used in the intercourse of life. We also carry on, in common with you, navigation, *war*, agriculture, and trade; we take part in your occupations, and our labour, when needful, we give to the public service[4]."

Still, although Christians did not by any means retire from the business of life, yet they were accustomed to devote many separate days peculiarly to examining their own hearts, and pouring them out before God, while they dedicated their life anew to Him with uninterrupted prayers, in order that they might again return to their ordinary occupations, with a renovated spirit of zeal and seriousness, and with renewed powers of sanctification. These days of holy devotion, days of prayer and penitence, which individual Christians appointed for themselves according to their individual necessities, were often a kind of fast-days. In order that their sensual feelings might less distract and impede the occupation of their heart with its holy contemplations, they were accustomed on these days to limit their corporeal wants more than usual, or to fast entirely. In the consideration of this, we must not overlook the peculiar nature of that hot climate in which Christianity was first promulgated. That which was spared by their abstinence on these days, was applied to the support of the poorer brethren. There were also many who, in

[4] A passage of Irenæus, where he speaks of their dependence on the heathen, under whom they lived, in respect of maintenance, will show how foreign to the notions of Christians in general was that monkery, which grew up in later days. It occurs lib. iv. c. 30. "Etenim, si is, qui tibi hæc imputabat, separatus est a gentilium cœtu, et nihil est alienorum apud eum, sed est simpliciter nudus, et nudis pedibus et sine domo in montibus conversatur, quemadmodum aliquot ex his animalibus, quæ herbis vescuntur: veniam merebitur, ideo quod ignoret necessitates nostræ conversationis."

the first warmth of zeal, at their baptism, made over to the Church chest, or to the poor, a large portion of their earthly property, or sometimes all that they had, because they felt themselves bound to declare, with all their power, their contempt of earthly things, by which their hearts had till now been enslaved, and to declare again with all their power what their heart was now full of, their cheerful readiness to offer and to sacrifice all they possessed to their Saviour, that they might win his heavenly crown. They felt as if the Lord had said to each of them, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow me." They led, in the midst of the community, a quiet retired life, maintained themselves by the labour of their hands, and remained unmarried, that undistracted by worldly cares, they might devote themselves to prayer and to the study of Scripture, to holy contemplations, and to endeavours after the kingdom of heaven. And what they could spare from the produce of their labour, living on the lowest possible allowance of the poorest food, they applied again to the purposes of Christian charity. Such persons were called the *abstinent*, the *zealous aspirants after Christian perfection*, "continentes," ἀσκηται[5]. There were besides many who from childhood, by means of a pious Christian education, were filled with so deep a love of the Divine nature, that they desired as far as possible to loosen all their earthly ties. People of this description were found in both sexes, and the females were especially called παρθενοι, "virgines[6]." Among the heathen themselves, "philosopher and ascetic" were [7]kindred ideas, and from them this same connexion of ideas, and this same sort of expression, passed over to the Christians, whom it particularly suited to refer the name of philosophy to a system of

[5] Ασκειν, ἀσκητης. These were common words at that time among heathens and Christians alike, to denote particular exercises and practices of a moral tendency.

[6] Tertullian speaks of these, de Cultu Fœmin. lib. ii. c. 9. "Aliqui abstinentes vino et animalibus esculentis, multi se spadonatui obsignant propter regnum Dei." And Justin Martyr also, Apol. ii. πολλοι τινες και πολλοι ἑξηκοντουτοι και ἑβδομηκοντουτοι, οἱ ἐκ παιδων ἐμαθητευθησαν τῳ Χριστῳ, ἀφθοροι διαμενουσι. This passage, however, will by no means bear us out in saying that all of these purposely from the beginning embraced this course of life.

[7] See, for instance, Artemidor. Oneirocrit. iv. where he speaks of an Ἀλεξανδρος ὁ φιλοσοφος, ἐμελε δε αὐτῳ ὀντι ἀνδρι ἀσκητῃ οὐτε γαμου οὐτε κοινωνιας οὐτε πλουτου· and v. 18. ἐφιλοσοφησεν ἐντονως και τοις λογοις και τῃ ἀσκησει χρησαμενος ἀκολουθως.

practice; and in later times, therefore, the name of φιλοσοφια was given to monkery. It was in part the case that some of these heathen ascetics, being led to Christianity by their serious endeavours after moral perfection, continued their former habits of life after their conversion, because they contained nothing, which necessarily of itself and by itself was repugnant to Christianity, or perhaps that others, in whom Christianity had first produced a seriousness of character, embraced these habits of life, as a token of the change which was wrought in them. The attention which they attracted by publicly appearing in the philosopher's cloak[8], the garb of the philosophic ascetics, they might make use of in order to enter upon philosophical and religious conversations with those whom curiosity or veneration gathered around them in the public walks and porticos, and to represent to them Christianity as the new and heavenly philosophy[9], which had come to them from the East. Justin Martyr is assuredly painting from the life, when he relates[1] that when he appeared on a public walk early in the morning, a multitude came to him with the words, "Good morrow, philosopher[2]!" and one of them said that he had learned from his master in philosophy, that the cloak of the philosopher was never to be slighted, but that those who appeared in it were to be welcomed in a friendly manner, and their conversation sought after; which then introduces a dialogue concerning the marks of true religion and on Christianity. "Rejoice," says Tertullian to the philosopher's mantle, "rejoice, for now a better philosophy has deigned to enclose itself within thee, since thou hast begun to be the garb of the Christian."

By what has been said, it will be judged natural, that from the opposition to worldly pleasures which Christianity called into action, this tendency to an ascetic life should have sprung up. We cannot look upon asceticism, abstractedly considered, as any thing unchristian, and condemn it, as long as those who practised it considered it only as a means towards the furtherance of holiness, particularly adapted to their own individual character, or as a means, under certain circumstances, particularly adapted to the furtherance and progress of the kingdom of God; as long as they did not make the means the end, nor forget the end in the means; as long as in the "opus operatum" of asceticism no

[8] τριβων, τριβωνιον—pallium.
[1] Dial. cum Tryph. Jud.
[9] φιλοσοφια των βαρβαρων.
[2] φιλοσοφε, χαιρε!

merit was claimed, nor the outward appearance of holiness deemed sufficient, while the real, essential, and inward purification of the heart, which is founded on love and on humility, was neglected or forgotten; in a word, as long as men attended to the important words of the apostle, who utters the following warning: "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." But as soon as this was forgotten, the transition would be rapid to a state, where the inward charnel-house of corruption would be whited over with the outward appearance of holiness; and under a Christian semblance, such an asceticism would be most inimical to the real interests of vital Christianity. Oh! that all ascetics had been animated by the spirit of humility and self-denial which the young Alcibiades showed among the confessors imprisoned at Lyons[3]. He had been accustomed, as an ascetic, to live only on bread and water, and he continued this habit also in prison, when it was revealed to Attalus, another of the confessors, by the voice of the Spirit in his inward heart, that Alcibiades was doing wrong, not to enjoy what God bestows, and to create by that means a jealousy among the other Christians. So Alcibiades immediately obeyed this exhortation, and without raising any scruples, enjoyed every thing, without distinction, in a spirit of thankfulness towards God[4].

As Christianity did not produce any momentary or magical change on human nature, but imparted to it a Divine principle of life, which, with man's co-operation, was by degrees to penetrate and ennoble his whole nature, as the old man constantly dragged himself along by the side of the new, it was to be expected, that the different dispositions of the old man, which at first opposed themselves in open array against the introduction of Christianity, again, in a later age, having stolen unperceived into the Christian life, should, under a Christian form, oppose genuine Christianity, and under this insidious form they would, of course, be far more dangerous.

This was also the case in regard to the particular circumstance of which we have been speaking. The two opposite and false tendencies, the one to a giddy enjoyment of worldly things, and the other to a proud contempt for the world, which Christianity on its first appearance had to combat, introduced themselves into Christian life, under a Christian form, not only in the sects which

[3] See Part I. p. 111. [4] Euseb. v. 3.

opposed the universal Church, (where we afterwards find them again,) but also in the midst of the Church herself.

On the one hand, as early as the time of Clement of Alexandria, there were those among the Christians, who rejected the exhortation "not to go, like the heathen, to the amusements of the theatre, and to consider deeply what is becoming to the seriousness of the Christian character," with the following excuse:—"We cannot be all philosophers and ascetics, we are unlearned people, we cannot read, we understand nothing of the Holy Scripture; how can people lay us under such strict and rigorous rules?" Clement answers these light-minded excuses in a truly evangelical spirit; such a distinction between worldly and spiritual persons could not be allowed among Christians, who were all bound, as such, to live in the same self-denial, all alike bound to be a spiritual people. "Are we not all striving after eternal life? What sayest thou? What signifies then thy belief? How canst thou love God and thy neighbour, without being a philosopher? (in that practical sense in which ascetics are called philosophers.) Although thou hast not learned to read, this forms no excuse to thee, for thou canst *hear* the word of God. Faith is the possession, not of those who are wise according to this world, but of those who are wise in God; faith is learnt without letters; the writing by which it is engraven on the heart, is a writing for the unlearned also, and it is nevertheless a Divine writing, and is called *love*[5]." And where he intimates how Christianity ought to leaven all the intercourse of life, he says: "Also the affairs of the world may be administered by a Christian, with God's will, after an unworldly manner, and thus those who are in trade, publicans and the like, may show a spirit of philosophy[6]."

On the other hand, a moral spirit was also formed on partial views, with an ascetic tendency, which, under a false point of view, set the human in opposition to the Divine,—which overlooked and mistook the character of Christianity by which it is destined to penetrate and ennoble all human relations—which sought a merit before God and man in fasts and abstinences—and

[5] Πιστις δε ου σοφων των κατα κοσμον, αλλα των κατα Θεον εστι το κτημα· ἡ δε και ανευ γραμματων εκπαιδευεται· και το συγγραμμα αυτης, το ἰδιωτικον αμα και το θειον αγαπη κεκληται. Pædagog. lib. iii. 255.

[6] Αλλα και τα εν κοσμῳ κοσμιως κατα Θεον απαγειν ου κεκωλυται· (there is here a play on the double meaning of the word *κοσμος*, in Greek, which can neither be translated into German nor English) και ταυτῃ φιλοσοφουντων οι αγοραιοι και οι καπηλοι.

which, ascribing a peculiar sanctity to the ascetic life and a state of celibacy, promised them a higher degree of future happiness[7]. From this fancy, joined with the false representation of a peculiar priesthood, and a peculiar class of priests in the Christian Church, there arose by degrees, in the course of the third century, the error that the single life belongs to the sanctity of the spiritual condition[8]. The notion of the meritorious efficacy of such a life, the reverence which men obtained by it, and perhaps also here and there the hope of obtaining a comfortable maintenance from the reverence of the community without personal labour[9], now moved many to enter into the order of women devoted only to the Lord. Thence, therefore, among these every kind of female vanity arose under the outward appearance of holiness, and was fostered by general deference and honour, which is of all things one of the most dangerous to mankind. Cyprian was, therefore, obliged to address a letter of exhortation and warning on the subject of the variety of dress, and the love of pomp, which had crept in among the rich damsels of Carthage, who were dedicated to God[1]. It sometimes happened that these people, while they despised the pure institution for human nature, to which God leads man by the voice of nature, and which Christianity has sanctified, created for themselves artificial relations, which opposed nature, and therefore opposed Christianity also; relations in which, while men forgot the weakness of the flesh and trusted too much to themselves, the corruptions of sense were likely to appear among spiritual things and pervert them; I allude to these young women, dwelling and living in common with unmarried spiritual persons, under the pretence of a connexion of a purely spiritual nature[2].

[7] Expressly in Origen, Homil. 10 in Jerem. § 4. Comp. Cyprian, de Habitu Virginum.

[8] The council of Elvira (from which, however, we cannot argue to the general use of the Church), in which the ascetic spirit prevailed strongly, ordered, canon 33, that those bishops, priests, and deacons, who were living in the marriage-state, should be deprived of their places.

[9] Æmulatio illas, non religio producit, aliquando et ipse venter Deus eorum, quia facile virgines fraternitas suscipit. Tertullian, de Virgg. Veland. c. xiv. It must be confessed that Tertullian is here speaking as a violent and exaggerated accuser of the Catholic Church.

[1] See the treatise de Habitu Virginum.

[2] Those who were afterwards called συνεισακτοι "subintroductæ." On the other side, see Cyprian, Ep. lxii. ad Pompon. Although, perhaps, Cyprian elsewhere speaks in too exaggerated language of the engagement, connected with the entrance

When once Christian perfection was made to consist in such a withdrawal from the usual habits of life, this inconvenience was sure to follow, that the requisites of Christian perfection would be lowered, and that the multitude would be at liberty to avail themselves of this, as an excuse for the non-performance of those things even, which Christianity requires from every man under all circumstances,—an excuse which, as we have observed above, Clement of Alexandria had to combat.

From the very first, however, voices of no mean account were raised against this false ascetic inclination, and called attention to the essentials of Christian feeling, by which alone all external things can acquire their true character. In the "Shepherd of Hermas," a writing much esteemed in the first centuries of Christianity, which represents the practical Christian life under an allegorical form, it is said [3], "Above all things exercise your abstinence in this, in abstaining from saying or listening to evil things, and purify your heart from all pollution, from all revengeful feelings and covetousness, and on the day in which you fast, content yourself with bread, vegetables, and water, and thank God for these. Reckon, however, how much your meal would have cost on this day, and give the price to which this comes to the widow, the orphan, or the poor. Happy is it for you, if you, with all your children, and with your whole household, observe these things." Clement of Alexandria appeals to the fact, that many forms of heathen worship required celibacy and abstinence from meat and wine in their priests, and that among the Indians there were strict ascetics, the Samaneans [4], and therefore he concludes, that what is found also in other religions, and also connected with superstition, cannot be in itself and of itself peculiarly Christian; and he adds, "Paul declares that the kingdom of God consists not in meats and drink, nor in abstaining from wine and meat, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. As humility is shown, not by the chastisement of the body, but by

into such a kind of life, as a "connubium spiritale cum Domino," he explains himself here with very proper moderation, and says, "Si autem perseverare nolunt vel non possunt, melius est, ut nubant, quam in ignem delictis suis cadant." But the council of Elvira decreed, canon 13, that virgins, who had thus left their order, and would not return to it, should not be allowed to receive the communion, even in the hour of death.

[3] Lib. iii. Similitud. v.

[4] [These are probably more familiar to the English reader under the name of Buddhists. See Encycl. Britann. in voc. H. J. R.]

gentleness, so also is temperance a virtue of the soul, and consists not in external but in internal abstinence. Temperance does not relate merely to any one individual thing, not merely to pleasure: but it is also temperance to despise money, to tame the tongue, and to obtain the mastery over evil by reason [5]."

A method of interpretation of Scripture which does not penetrate into its spirit, but relies on passages isolated from their context, which it therefore must misunderstand, would necessarily often serve as the support of theoretical and practical errors in Christianity; and that was the case here also. Passages, where Christ says that the rich enter with difficulty into the kingdom of heaven, where he requires of the rich young man, in order to attain perfection, that he should sell all his goods, distribute to the poor, and follow him—these passages were so misunderstood, that people concluded from them that the bare possession of earthly wealth was a thing incompatible with real Christianity, and that the renunciation of the world consisted in the renunciation of *external* things. They did not observe that the Redeemer, who saw even the hearts of men, laid this trial of self-denial on the young man just *exactly for this very reason*, that he was most enslaved in this one point, and because he might best be taught by demanding this proof, how far short he still was from the moral perfection and fulfilment of the law, which he had flattered himself belonged to him. Clement of Alexandria, in his beautiful essay, entitled, "How shall the rich man act, in order to be saved [6]?" endeavoured to oppose this error, and the notions founded upon it, by showing that with our Saviour all depends upon the affections. "Our Saviour," says Clement, "does not command us, as many superficially suppose, to cast away our earthly property, but to banish from our souls the thoughts of money, and desires after it—that sickness of the soul, the cares, the thorns of this earthly life, which choke the seed of heavenly life. . . . . What is that which our Lord announces as something new, as the only source of life of which those of old knew nothing? What is this which is peculiar to him? What the new creation? He desires not that which is outward, which others have also done, but something higher, more divine, and more perfect, which is signified by this outward conduct; namely, that *all which is foreign to the soul must be torn out by the roots*, and

[5] Clemens, Strom. lib. iii. p. 446, &c.

[6] Τις ὁ σωζομενος πλουσιος; § 11.

banished from the soul. . . . . For they who of old despised outward things, gave away indeed their earthly goods, but they cherished within them far stronger desires; for they were filled with vanity, pride, and contempt of other men, as if they had done something above the reach of simple humanity. . . . . A man may have thrown away his earthly goods, and yet his desire for them being undiminished, he will be doubly disquieted by regret for his profusion, and by his deprivation of the necessaries of life. . . . . How could one man impart of his goods to another, when all had nothing? and how could this doctrine of our Lord escape being in contradiction with many other of his glorious doctrines? . . . . . Worldly goods are only to be considered as so much materials and instruments, to be turned to good purposes, by those who know how to put them to their proper use."

When the Montanists (see below) wished to impose upon the Church new fasts and laws of abstinence, the spirit of evangelical freedom among the Christians spoke out fully and powerfully against them. They were accused of not duly distinguishing between the economy of the Old and of the New Testament, of making laws in matters where all is free according to the spirit of the Gospel, where every one must act freely, according to his own particular feelings and necessities; as the only abstinence which is commanded of God, is abstinence from evil in the heart [7].

If by a misconception of the opposition to the world which Christianity introduced, the moral life received an ascetic direction, this was again counterbalanced by the essential tendency of Christianity to display its chief glory in the unpretending stillness of domestic life, to ennoble domestic intercourse by a Divine life, and to form the family into a temple of God. It was Christianity which first presented marriage to the world in the light of an union of deep religious and spiritual import, the communion which belongs to a higher state of life, an union which reaches beyond this transitory world, and unites in one common life the mutual and consecrated powers of two beings to the glory of God. The marriage-state was, therefore, ennobled, as giving scope to so many peculiar and Christian virtues, which, under other circumstances, could never be so far developed. Clement of Alexandria says against those who prized celibacy too highly, and despised

[7] Tertullian, de Jejuniis.

marriage, "The genuine Christian has the apostles for patterns, and, in fact, a man does not distinguish himself by choosing a solitary life, but he obtains a victory over other men, who stands fast as a husband and father, amidst all the trials which befal him by anxiety for wife and children, servants and fortune, without allowing himself to be withdrawn from his love to God. But he who has no household escapes many trials; as he has only himself to take care of, he is below that man who, more disturbed in the care of his own individual salvation, still enters more into the intercourse of life, and really exhibits in miniature a likeness of Providence itself[8]." In painting the Christian mistress of a family[9], he says, "The mother is the theme of the children's praise, the wife is the theme of her husband's praise; and both of these are the theme of the woman's praise, while God is the theme of the united praise of all." And Tertullian also[1]: "What an union for two believers, to have one hope, one desire, one course of life, one service of God, in common the one with the other! Both, like brother and sister, undivided in heart and flesh, or rather really two in one flesh, fall down together on their knees, they pray and fast together, they teach, they exhort, they bear one another mutually, they are together in the church of God, and in the supper of the Lord; they share with one another their grievances, their persecutions, and their joys; neither hides any thing from the other, neither avoids the other; the sick are visited by them with pleasure, and the needy supported; psalms and hymns resound between them, and they mutually strive who shall best praise their God. Christ is delighted to see and hear things like these; He sends his peace on such as these; where two are, there is He; and where He is, evil comes not."

It was anxiously desired that the Christian mistresses of families, by the seriousness of their whole demeanour, by their modest, simple clothing, should give a token of their inmost sentiments, and that these sentiments should shine forth in such a manner more eminently, from their appearance in an age when extravagant pomp and luxury, and a general corruption of morals, prevailed. Here, however, two parties stood opposed to each other; the one making humility consist in poverty of clothing, worn to be displayed, and carrying the notion of the form of a servant as necessary to the Christian life to the utmost extreme, while the other

[8] Strom. lib. vii. p. 741. [9] Pædagog. lib. iii. p. 250. [1] Ad Uxorem, lib. ii. c. 8.

said, "It is enough, if our hearts are such as those of Christian women ought to be; God looks to the sentiments, and regards not the outside. Wherefore should we outwardly display the change that has been inwardly wrought in us? We ought far rather to give the heathen no occasion to accuse Christianity, as incompatible with the customs of the world[2]. We possess these worldly goods; wherefore should we not make use of them? Why should we not enjoy what we have? For whom then are these excellent things created, if not for us? For whom are *costly* things to be, if all prefer that which is *not costly?*"[3] Clement of Alexandria answered thus to the latter argument: "Even if all be *given* us, if all be *allowed* us, if all be permitted to us, yet all may not be becoming, as the apostle says; God has created our sex for bestowing and imparting, He has created every thing for all, and all is a general term, and the richer must make no exclusive use of his gifts. Those words also are neither humane, nor in correspondence with our social affections. Love would rather argue thus: 'I have these things, why should I not bestow them on the needy'?" Tertullian says, "What cause can you have to go out gaily dressed, for you are far from all where this can be required? For you go not about to the temples, you require no plays, and know nothing of the festivals of the heathen! You have no other than serious matters which require you to appear abroad. A sick brother is to be visited, the communion celebrated, or a discourse delivered; and if the calls of friendship require your attendance on the heathen, why should you not appear in your own peculiar armour, and the rather that, going to unbelievers, you may show them the difference between the servants of God and those of Satan, that you may serve for an ensample to them, and they may be instructed by you?"

As long as the *religious and moral* point of view in which Christianity first presented marriage was strictly adhered to, it was felt, that where the bond of religion did not unite the consciences, where, on the contrary, there was a decided disunion in the highest circumstance of the inward life, the true import

[2] Tertullian, de Cultu Fœminarum, especially lib. ii. c. xi.

[3] Clemens, Pædagog. lib. ii. c. xi.

[4] Tertullian, in the writing we have quoted, and Cyprian (de Habitu Virginum) express similar sentiments. Tertullian had apparently seen this work of Clement, and Cyprian probably read both.

of marriage could never receive its fulfilment. It was, therefore, wished that no marriages should ever take place between Christians and heathens. Tertullian endeavours to show how a Christian woman of piety, one to whom Christianity was the soul of her life, who belonged to the Church as a living member of it, and who felt herself happy in communion with it, must be distracted and limited a thousand-fold in the practice of her religion by living with a heathen, and must also be injured in her disposition. He says, "When an assembly for prayer is to be held, the husband will destine the day to the use of the bath; when a fast is to be observed, he will invite company to a feast. There will never be more impediments from household business, than just exactly when the duties of Christian charity require the wife to go abroad. [The passage then follows, which we quoted above, p. 279, expressing the duties of a Christian wife, in which she would find impediments from her husband.] What mutual songs could one lead the other to sing? She will hear something of the theatre, or from the public-house; where is the mention of God's name? where is Christ called upon? where will be the strengthening of faith by the quotation of Scripture in conversation[8]? where the quickening of the Spirit? where the Divine blessing?"

The case was different where Christianity found a union already existing, which it could only sanctify, and not dissolve, from that where a Christian, of either sex, voluntarily engaged in a connexion, which was sure to bring with it many distractions and heartburnings in the inward life, and many trials; it was one thing where a man found himself in a condition full of trial by a train of circumstances coming immediately from God, and therefore walking forward quietly in the path prescribed to him by God, might expect his protection in these trials, and his deliverance from them, and quite another, when a man, of his own accord, threw himself into temptations. For the first, there was the express command of the Lord, who permitted divorce only in one case, and the consideration of this very matter by

[8] "Ubi fomenta fidei de Scripturarum *interjectione?*" according to the reading of Rigaltius; according to that of Pamelius, it is "*interlectione,*" "the mutual reading" of the Holy Scriptures. It is difficult to decide which is the genuine reading. As in the whole passage he is speaking of quotation during conversation, the first reading is very appropriate. And if this reading be genuine, it follows that both man and wife ought to possess a familiar acquaintance with the Bible.

St. Paul. Tertullian says, therefore, "The case is different with those who, when they were brought to believe, were already married to heathens: since such a marriage is valid in the eyes of God, why should it not also continue full of blessings, so that it should continue to be spared many afflictions, distractions, and stains, forasmuch as it has *on one side* the protection of God's grace? It is quite a different thing to enter into forbidden connexions, voluntarily and uncalled."—"The manner in which his wife was converted to Christianity," says Tertullian, "may make a strong impression on the heathen husband himself, so that he would refuse to disturb her, or to watch her too much. He has perceived a thing of much importance; he has seen proofs of that which God effects; he knows that she is become better. And thus, those will be more easily won, to whom the grace of God is brought home[6]." It must be avowed, that the observation of this change did not always make so favourable an impression. Many a husband, blindly devoted to heathenism, when he observed that his wife, whose conduct he had formerly been obliged to watch most jealously, all at once became so fond of home and so modest, but at the same time found that this change was owing to Christianity, he divorced her, whose vices he had before endured. It also happened frequently, that a Christian woman, who, having married a vicious husband, had formerly, while she was a heathen, herself ministered to his vices, found herself, as a Christian, bound in conscience to discontinue this conduct. She would endeavour at first to lead him to a better way, by exhortation and persuasion. But when he rejected this with indignation, she would feel herself obliged to withdraw from participating in his sinful habits of life, and to divorce herself from him; and this became the source of many persecutions raised by embittered husbands[7].

As the religious view of marriage so predominated, it was therefore ordained, in early times, that the *sanction of the Church* should be added to the civil ceremony. The pastor of the Church and the deaconesses were called together, and it was declared that this marriage was one contracted after God's will, and not from human passions, and that all was done to the honour of God[8]. Bride and bridegroom received the communion together; they offered there a common gift to the Church; and

[6] [This extract is from Tertull. ad Uxor. ii. 8. H. J. R.]
[7] V. Justin M. Apolog. ii.
[8] Ignatii Ep. ii. ad Polycarp. § 5.

hence, again, in the prayer of the Church connected with the communion, a blessing was particularly asked for the newly-concluded marriage. How highly this consecration, on the part of the Church, was esteemed by Christians, we may judge from the following passage of Tertullian: "How shall we be able to declare the happiness of that marriage, which is concluded by the Church, sealed by the communion, and consecrated by the blessing of the Church, which angels announce, and which our heavenly Father recognises as valid [9]."

Prayer was considered the soul of the whole Christian life. Men united in the acknowledgment of this, who, from the difference in their dispositions and their habits of thought, were widely at variance on many important matters. Where the spirit of Christianity brings together two opposite natures, even the strongest differences hardly make their appearance; as, for instance, in the contrast between the practical realism of Tertullian, whose habits of thought led him to corporealize every thing, and the speculative turn of Origen, who was inclined to run into the opposite extreme, and spiritualize every thing. Both of these show themselves alike penetrated with vital Christianity, when they speak of prayer; both speak from their own internal experience, and in both the true spirit of vital Christianity here breaks forth. In accordance with the usual mode of conception in the earlier days of Christianity, Tertullian considers prayer as the exercise of the Christian priesthood. "This is the spiritual sacrifice," he says[1], "which has superseded the sacrifice of the old covenant," Isa. i. 11. "This passage shows us what God does not require; what He does require, the Gospel teaches us. 'The time cometh when the true worshippers shall worship God in spirit and in truth; for God is a Spirit.' We are the true worshippers and the true priests, we who pray to Him in spirit, and offer up to Him the sacrifices suited to his Divine Being, and well-pleasing to Him—that which He requires. What can the God, who desires this prayer, have refused to the prayer that comes from the Spirit and from the Truth? How much do we

[9] Ad Uxor. ii. 8.

[1] C. xxviii. de Orat. in the pieces first published by Muratori, vol. iii. Anecdotorum Bibl. Ambros.

[Bishop Kaye (Tertullian, p. 406,) states it as his opinion that these additional chapters to the treatise de Oratione are not genuine. H. J. R.]

read, hear, and believe, of the proofs of its efficacy!" He pictures then the peculiar efficacy of Christian prayer—how it ought to correspond to the form of religion delivered in the New Testament, and how Christian prayer displays its real power, not *in saving men by miracles in the season of death and sufferings*, but *in making them capable of bearing death and sufferings with tranquillity and cheerful resignation.* "By the power of the grace imparted, it abates not the pain of the suffering, but it arms the sufferer, and him that feels the pain, with power to bear it. The prayer of the Christian brings not down retaliation from heaven, but it averts the anger of God; it watches for its enemies, it prays for its persecutors, it obtains forgiveness of sins, it frightens away temptations, it comforts the faint-hearted, it quickens the courageous: *prayer is the wall of faith.*" Origen says[2], "How much has each one of us to relate of the efficacy of prayer, if he is inclined to remember with thankfulness the benefits of God. Souls, which had long been unfruitful, and who were well aware how dry they were, when fructified by the Holy Spirit from the force of constant prayer, produced words of salvation, full of the conceptions of truth. What hostile powers, that threatened to annihilate our holy faith, have been often brought to shame!—We trust to that which says, 'Some put their trust in chariots and horses, but we will think on the name of the Lord our God,' (Psalm xx. 8.) and we found that 'a horse is but a vain thing to save a man.' He that confides in prayer has often vanquished even the power of plausible reasons, which were sufficient to terrify those who were accounted believers. How often do those, who have fallen into temptations, hard to be overcome, suffer no shame from them, and come forth from them unhurt, without even being touched by the smell of the fire that was kindled against them! And what further shall I add? How often has it happened that those who have been delivered up to wild beasts enraged against us, to evil spirits and cruel men, have brought these beings to silence, so that their teeth could not touch us, who are the members of Christ! . . . We know that many who had fallen away from the commands of God, and lay already in the pit of death, have been saved by the prayer of repentance." But the very nature of the Christian life supposes, that nothing

[2] De Orat. § 13. [§ 35. ed. Reading. Lond. 1728.]

in it can exist insulated from the other parts of it; all that comes particularly forward at any one moment, is yet something which has a foundation in the internal life, considered as a whole proceeding from one centre. The spirit of thankfulness to a heavenly, redeeming Father—the spirit of childlike devotion to Him—the feeling, in regard to Him, of the needfulness of his assistance, and the consciousness of being nothing, and of being able to do nothing without Him—was to animate the whole Christian life. This life was, therefore, to be a continued thanksgiving for the grace of redemption, a prayer of constant longing after an increase of holiness by communion with the Redeemer. This was *the* view of prayer which the New Testament was destined to substitute in the place of that which had previously prevailed; a view, which looked on prayer as an individual act, dependent on certain times and hours, and consisting in individual effusions or particular forms. And thus the Fathers of this age expressed themselves. Origen says[3], "He prays without ceasing, who unites prayer and action together properly, since works also are a part of prayer; for the apostle's words, 'Pray without ceasing,' are to be considered as something which may be achieved, if we consider the whole life of the believer as one continued prayer[4]; of which prayer, usually so called, forms only a part." And the same Origen says, in regard to the Lord's Prayer[5], "We cannot believe that words have been taught us, only to be recited at a certain hour of prayer. If we understand properly that which is said in regard to 'praying without ceasing,' our whole life—if we are inclined thus to pray without ceasing—must say, 'Our Father, which art in heaven,' since such a life has its conversation, not on earth, but by all means in heaven, since we* are the throne of God, because the kingdom of heaven has its habitation in all those who bear the form of the heavenly man, and by that means become heavenly." Clement of Alexandria says[6], "Prayer, if I may speak so boldly, is intercourse

[3] De Orat. § 12. [§ 31. ed. Reading.]

[4] Εἰ παντα τον βιον του ἁγιου μιαν συναπτομενην μεγαλην εἰποιμεν εὐχην.

[5] De Orat. c. xxii. [§ 57. ed. Reading.]

[6] Stromat. lib. vii. p. 722.

* [In Reading's edition the passage runs thus: Ἐν οὐρανοις, θρονοις τυγχανουσι του Θεου, "in heaven, *which is the throne of God.*" I have translated from the German. H. J. R.]

with God. If we only lisp, if we even silently speak to God, the lips not moving; yet we cry to Him in our hearts, for God listens always to the inward direction of the heart to Him[7]." The same person, when he wishes to represent an ideal picture of a Christian in heart, ripened in faith and profession, says of him[8], "In every place will he pray, though not openly, to be seen of men. Even when he is walking for pleasure, even when he is in converse with other men, in stillness, in reading, and when he is engaged in reasonable business, he prays by all means. And even also if he only think on God in the chamber of *the soul*, and with silent sighings calls upon his Father; He *will be near him* and with him, for he is still speaking to Him[9]."

But although prayer be a direction of the heart which goes through the whole of the Christian life, yet it must nevertheless become more prominent in *special effusions of the heart*, and in compliance with the wants of man, as a creature of sense, it must make itself heard *also in words;* and these particular seasons must form a kind of consecration for all the rest of the life. The Christians were accustomed to select those hours for prayer, which had been usually so employed by the Jews—the third, the sixth, and the ninth, according to the then division of the day—that is, nine in the morning, twelve, and three in the afternoon—not as if prayer were dependent on any certain times; but as Tertullian[1] declared, "in order that those who were likely to be withdrawn from the duty of prayer by earthly business, might be reminded of it." The Christians were, besides, accustomed to sanctify by prayer all the more important seasons of the day, and all transactions of any importance, in regard either to spiritual or temporal life; for even all that is earthly was to be rendered holy by being referred to that which is heavenly. "It becomes the believer," says Tertullian, "to take no food, to enter no bath, without the intervention of prayer; for the strengthening and refreshing of the soul ought to precede the strengthening and refreshing of the body; the heavenly ought to precede the earthly." Thus also the Christian, who had received into his house a brother from a distant land, and refreshed him with all that lay in his power, was bound not

[7] πασαν γαρ την ἐνδιαθετον ὁμιλιαν ὁ Θεος ἀδιαλειπτως ἐπαιει.

[8] Stromat. lib. vii. p. 728.

[9] Ὁ δε ἐγγυς και ἐτι λαλουντος παρεστιν.

[1] Lib. cit. c. xxv.

to dismiss him without prayer; he was to feel as if he had, in this stranger-brother, seen the Lord himself in his house; and by the guest, the earthly refreshment which he had received, was not to be thought of more value than the heavenly, which was offered to him at his departure[2]. Under any pressing emergencies, which affected the community in general, or those in whom they took particular interest, they all assembled for the purpose of prayer, and all general deliberations were opened with prayer. It was in prayer that the brotherly communion and the mutual sympathy of the members of the one body were to be shown; every one was to pray in the spirit of all, and commend the circumstances of all the brethren, which he looked upon as his own, to the Head of the Church, and through Him to eternal love. Thus Cyprian says in the explanation of the Lord's Prayer: "The teacher of peace and communion did not wish that each individual should pray for himself, but that every one should pray for all. We do not say 'my Father,' but 'our Father,' and every one prays not for the forgiveness of *his own sins alone*, nor for *himself alone*, 'that he may not be led into temptation, and may be delivered from evil.' Ours is a common prayer, and when we pray, we pray not only for individuals, but for the whole Church; because we, as members of the Church, are all one. God, the author of peace and concord, wished that thus every one should pray for all, as He has included all in one." And when bishop Cyprian, under the pressure of persecution, was encouraging his Church to prayer, he wrote thus[3]:—"Let every one pray to God, not for himself alone, but for *all brethren*, as the Lord has taught us to pray."

As it was acknowledged and believed that Divine things could only be understood under the light of the Divine Spirit, and that

[2] I shall here subjoin a translation of the whole passage, (Tertullian, de Orat. c. xxvi.) which is not wholly without its difficulties. "But he himself (the brother who is come from foreign lands), after he has been received* by the brethren, must not prize the earthly refreshment he has received higher than the heavenly; for immediately his faith will be condemned," (that is, he will prove his unbelief, if he esteems the parting prayer, the blessing of his Christian brother, his host, as nothing, compared with the bodily refreshment afforded to him,) "or, how canst thou, after the command of the Lord, say, 'Peace be to this house,' unless thou returnest, to those who dwell in the house, the wish of blessing, which they have first bestowed on thee?"

[3] Ep. vii.

* I think, in this passage, we must read "exceptus" instead of "exemptis."

by prayer the heavenly fountain was opened to man, prayer was considered as the necessary means to a knowledge of Divine things, and a right understanding of Scripture. When Origen, that great father of the Church, who had called together all those human means for the understanding of Scripture, and the development of its doctrines, which could only be had in his time, as well as directed all his learned and speculative study to the same purpose, was exhorting his disciple, the young Gregory (afterwards called Thaumaturgus), to diligent "knocking and seeking" in the study of Scripture, he added, "but let it not be enough for you to knock and to seek;—to a knowledge of Divine things, the most necessary means is prayer[4]. To incite us to this, our Saviour did not say merely, 'knock and it shall be opened to you, seek and ye shall find,' but also, 'pray and it shall be given to you.'"

It was usual on those days which were especially dedicated to the memory of the resurrection of Christ, to pray standing upright, in remembrance that Christ had raised up to heaven man who was fallen and sunk in worldly defilements; but on other days they prayed kneeling. But Origen, nevertheless, cautions men against the notions which made them forget inward things in outward forms; he turned them from the latter to the former, and endeavoured to show, that outward things have no importance except in reference to inward, and of themselves and in themselves are matters of indifference. "Before a man," he says[5], "stretches out his hands to heaven, he must raise his soul thither; before a man raises up his eyes, he must raise his spirit up to God; for we cannot doubt, that out of a thousand possible attitudes of the body, those with outspreading of the hands and uplifting of the eyes must be preferred to all others, as giving some representation of the dispositions proper to prayer. We think that this must be preferred, where no peculiar circumstances exist; for under certain circumstances, in cases of illness, people may pray sitting or lying. And under certain circumstances, as for instance, when men are on ship-board, or where the present state of the case will not admit of their offering up the proper prayers, they may then pray, without appearing to do so. And because kneeling is required when a man confesses his own sins to God, and prays for forgiveness of them, every one

[4] ἀναγκαιοτατη γαρ και ἡ περι του νοειν τα Θεια εὐχη. [5] Chap. xxxi.

must perceive that this position is a token of a bowed down and humble spirit." Origen, Tertullian, and Cyprian accordingly explain, Philipp. ii. 10, of such a spiritual bowing of the knee and self-humiliation, in the name of Christ, saying that it does not relate to the vain show of outward gestures, but to the disposition of the heart towards God. "God hears not the voice, but the heart," says Cyprian; "He sees the thoughts of men, and requires not to be reminded by their cry; as Hannah, in the Book of Kings, represents to us the form of the Church, which prays to God, not with the outcry of prayer, but in the still depths of the heart. She spoke in silent prayer, but her faith was known to God."

That which we have above extracted from Tertullian's picture of the blessedness of a Christian marriage, shows that spiritual songs in common, and a common reading of the Scriptures, formed part of the daily edification of a Christian family. Thus Clement of Alexandria also recommends united prayers and reading of the Bible together[6], as proper morning occupations for a Christian couple. The controversial writings of Tertullian on matters of ecclesiastical life and of morality, where he considers himself as opposing laymen, show that these latter were also well acquainted with the Scriptures, and were accustomed to judge things that related to life out of them.

From the general consideration of the Christian life, and of family devotion, we now pass to that of the public worship of the early Christians.

(2.) *On the Public Worship of God.*

(a.) *Nature of Christian worship in general.*

SINCE the religion of the New Testament did not admit of any peculiar, outward priesthood, similar to that of the Old, the same outward kind of worship, dependent on certain places, times, and outward actions and demeanours, would also have no place in its composition. The kingdom of God, the temple of the Lord, were to be present, not in this or that place, but in every place, where Christ himself is active in the Spirit, and where through Him the worship of God in spirit and in truth is established. Every Christian in particular, and every Church in general, was to represent

[6] *Εὐχη και ἀναγνωσις*, Pædag. lib. ii. p. 194, D.

a spiritual temple of the Lord; the true worship of God was to be only in the inward heart; and the whole life, proceeding from such inward dispositions, sanctified by faith, was to be a continued spiritual service: this is the great fundamental idea of the Gospel, which prevails throughout the New Testament, by which the whole outward appearance of religion was to assume a different form, and all that once was carnal, was to be converted into spiritual, and ennobled. This notion came forward most strongly in the original inward life of the first Christians, particularly when contrasted with Judaism, and still more so when contrasted with heathenism;—a contrast, which taught the Christians to avoid all pomp that caught the eye, and all multiplication of means of devotion, addressed to the senses, while it made them hold fast the simple, spiritual character of the Christian worship of God. It was this which always struck the heathen so much in the Christian worship; namely, that nothing was found among them of the outward pomp of all other religions: "no temples, no altars, no images." This reproach was made to the Christians by Celsus, and answered thus by Origen: "In the highest sense the temple and the image of God are in the human nature of Christ; and hence, also, in all the faithful, who are animated by the Spirit of Christ—living images! with which no statue of Jove by Phidias is fit to be compared[7]." Christianity impelled men frequently to seek for the stillness of the inward sanctuary, and here to pour forth their heart to God, who dwells in such temples; but then the flames of love were also lighted in their hearts, which sought communion, in order to strengthen each other mutually, and to unite themselves into one holy flame, which pointed towards heaven. The *communion* of prayer and devotion was thought a source of sanctification, inasmuch as men knew that the Lord was present by his Spirit among those who were gathered together in his name; but then they were far from ascribing any peculiar sacredness and sanctity to the place of assembly. Such an idea would appear to partake of heathenism; and men were at first in less danger of being seduced into such an idea, because the first general places of assembly of the Christians were only common rooms in private houses, just according as it happened that any member of the Church had sufficient accommodation for the purpose. Thus Gaius of Corinth (Rom. xvi.) is called the host

[7] C. Celsum, viii. p. 400. [The passage, from which I suppose this is taken, though not literally translated, is p. 389. ed. Spencer. H. J. R.]

of the Church, because the Church was in the habit of assembling in a room of his house. Origen says [8]:—"The place, where believers come together to pray, has something agreeable and useful about it;" but then he only says this in respect to that spiritual communion. "Christ," he thinks, "with the host of angels, dwells in the assembly of the saints; therefore we may not despise prayer in such assemblies, for they have a peculiar power for those who take part in them with an upright heart." "Not the place, but the congregation of the elect, I call the Church," says Clement of Alexandria [9]. Tertullian says [1]:—"We may pray in every place to which accident or necessity brings us; for the apostles, who prayed to God and sang to his praise in prison before the ears of the jailor, no more contravened the commands of the Lord than Paul, who celebrated the Lord's Supper in the ship before the eyes of all:" (Acts xxvii.) This was a remarkable proof of a free and evangelical spirit, although the application of the latter passage is erroneous.

Man, we must avow, is very easily led to fall away from the worship of God in spirit and in truth, and to connect the religion of the Spirit with outward and earthly things; as the apostle says, "having begun in the spirit, to wish to end in the flesh." Watchfulness on this point was constantly needed, lest the Jewish or the heathen notions should here intrude themselves on those of the Gospel, which was likely enough to happen as soon as the Old and the New Testament notions of the priesthood had been confused. Even in the time of Clement of Alexandria he found himself obliged to combat the notion, which allowed the essentials of a Christian life to be of one kind in, and of another out of, the Church. "The disciples of Christ," he says [2], "ought to form the whole course of their life and conduct on the model which they assume in the churches, for the sake of propriety; they ought to *be* such, and not merely to *seem so*, as mild, as pious, and as charitable: but now, I know not how it is, they change their habits and their manners with the change of place, as the polypus, they say, changes its colour, and becomes like the rock on which it

[8] De Orat. c. xxxi. [C. lxvi. ed. Reading. This extract is selected from different parts of the chapter. Origen supposes the disembodied spirits of the saints, &c. to be present in these assemblies. H. J. R.]

[9] Οὐ γαρ τον τοπον, ἀλλα το ἀθροισμα των ἐκλεκτων ἐκκλησιαν καλω. Stromat. vii. 715, B.

[1] De Orat. c. xxiv.

[2] Pædagog. iii. p. 256.

hangs. They lay aside the spiritual habit which they had assumed in the church, as soon as they have left the church, and assimilate themselves to the multitude, among whom they live. I should rather say, that they convict themselves of hypocrisy, and show what they really are in their inward nature, by laying aside the mask of piety which they had assumed; and while they honour the word of God, they leave it behind them in the place where they heard it."

(b.) *The Christian Places of Assembly.*

We observed above, that the Christian places of assembly were, at first, in the rooms of private houses; it may, perhaps, be the case, that in large towns, where the number of Christians was soon considerable, and no member of the Church had any room in his house sufficient to contain all his brethren, or in places where men did not fear any prejudicial consequences from large assemblies, the Church divided itself into different sections, according to the habitations of its members, of which each section held its assemblies in one particular chamber of the house of some wealthy member of the Church; or, perhaps, while it was usual to unite on Sundays in one general assembly, yet each individual part of the Church met together daily in the rooms which lay the most convenient to it. Perhaps the passages in St. Paul's Epistles, which speak of Churches in *the houses of particular persons*, are thus to be understood [3]. The answer of Justin Martyr, to the question of the præfect, "Where do you assemble?" exactly corresponds to the genuine Christian spirit on this point. This

[3] "The Church in his house," ἡ κατ' οἶκον αὐτου ἐκκλησια. These passages certainly cannot allude to the places of assembly of whole Churches, for in many of them, the ἡ κατ' οἶκον τινος ἐκκλησια is expressly distinguished from the whole of the Church (1 Cor. xvi. 19, 20). Here we first have the Church "that is in the house" of Aquilas and Priscilla, and then "all the brethren," which would be a piece of tautology on that supposition. Comp. Coloss. iv. 15. And besides, there is another objection to such an interpretation, which is this, that then we must suppose Aquilas to have held the assemblies of the Church in his own house, both when at Rome, his usual abode, and when at Ephesus (comp. Rom. xvi. 5, and 1 Cor. xvi. 19). Now it is very unlikely, that the whole Church should have changed its place of assembly every time that Aquilas arrived at either place. It is far more easy to conceive that men, whose trade required a roomy habitation, wherever they might be,—such as that of Aquilas, the tent-maker,—generally gave up a room in their house for a part of the Church to assemble in; and more especially when they were qualified, as probably Aquilas was, by their gift and capacity of instructing, to serve for the edification of small congregations.

answer was; "Where each one can and will. You believe, no doubt, that we all meet together in one place; but it is not so, for the God of the Christians is not shut up in a room, but being invisible, he fills both heaven and earth, and is honoured every where by the faithful." Justin adds, that when he came to Rome, he was accustomed to dwell in one particular spot, and that those Christians, who were instructed by him [4], and wished to hear his discourses, assembled at his house. He had not visited any other congregations of the Church [5].

The arrangements which the peculiarities of the Christian worship required, were gradually made in these places of assembly, such as an elevated seat [6] for the purpose of reading the Scriptures and preaching, a table for the distribution of the sacrament, to which as early as the time of Tertullian the name of altar, *ara* or *altare*, was given, and perhaps not without some mixture of the unevangelic Old Testament notion of a sacrifice—or, at least, this idea might easily attach itself to this name. When the Churches increased, and their circumstances improved, there were, during the course of the third century, already separate church buildings for the Christians, as the name θρησκευσιμοι τοποι of the Christians occurs in the edict of Gallienus [7]. In the time of the external prosperity of the Church, during the reign of Diocletian, many handsome churches arose in the great towns.

The use of images was originally quite foreign to the Christian worship and churches, and it remained so during this whole period. The intermixture of art and religion, and the use of images for the latter, appeared to the first Christians a heathenish practice.

[4] This would accordingly be, ἡ κατ' οἰκον του Ἰουστινου ἐκκλησια.

[5] [This dialogue is found in the Act. Mart. S. Justin. in Ruinart, who professes to edit it after Surius and others. Papebroch (Act. Sanct. Aprilis, vol. ii. p. 104) contends, that this act of martyrdom belongs to a different Justin, and is answered by Ruinart, p. 54—58. H. J. R.]

[6] Suggestus, pulpitum. [Thus Constit. Apost. ii. 57. μεσος δ' ὁ ἀναγνωστης ἐφ' ὑψηλου τινος ἑστως. H. J. R.]

[7] See above, p. 142. If the account of the Chronicle of Edessa (in Asseman, Biblioth. Oriental. t. i. 391) is to be depended on, a Christian church must have been built as early as A.D. 202 at Edessa. The Chronicle was first published in the sixth century, but the author made use of older documents, which, however, if we may judge from the document about the letters that passed between Christ and Abgarus, cannot have been quite authentic. If also the explanation of the passage in that Chronicle, given by Michaelis (Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek, pt. x. p. 61), be just, this church must have been built according to the model of the Jewish temple, and divided into three parts.

As in heathenism the Divine becomes desecrated and tarnished by intermixture with the Natural, and as men have often paid homage to the beauties of nature with injury to the cause of holiness, the first warmth of Christian zeal, which opposed the idolatry of nature, so common to heathenism, and sought to maintain the Divine in all its purity and elevation, was inclined rather to set holiness in the strongest contrast with what is beautiful by nature, than to endeavour to grace it by lending it a beautiful form. Men were more inclined in general to carry into extremes the idea of the appearance of the Divinity in the form of a servant, which suited the oppressed condition of the Church in these centuries, than to throw it into the back-ground, and overwhelm it under the predominance of their æsthetic dispositions, and their love of art. This is peculiarly shown by the general belief of the early Church, that Christ had clothed his inward Divine glory in a mean outward form, which was in direct contradiction to it; a conclusion which was drawn from interpreting the prophecy of the Messiah, in Isaiah liii. 2, too literally. Thus Clement of Alexandria warns the Christians, from the example of Christ, not to attribute too much value to outward beauty. "The Lord himself was mean in outward form; . . . . . and who is better than the Lord? But He revealed himself, not in the beauty of the body, perceptible to our senses, but in the true beauty of the soul as well as of the body; the beauty of the soul consisting in benevolence, and that of the body in immortality[8]!"

Church-teachers of entirely opposite habits of mind, the adherents of two different systems of conceiving Divine things, the one after a sensuous manner, the other after a spiritualizing mode,—realists and idealists, who, from these opposite habits of mind, might have very different views on this point, just as, in later times, different views of this matter proceeded from such a fundamental difference in habits of thought;—these Church-teachers were nevertheless united on this point by their common opposition to the mixture of the natural and the Divine in heathenism, and by the endeavour to maintain the devotion to God in spirit and in truth, pure and undefiled. Clemens of Alexandria is as little favourable as Tertullian to the use of images. He says, against the use of images by the heathen, "We must not cling to that which is sensuous, but elevate ourselves to that which is spiritual; the habit of daily looking upon the representation of the Divine nature desecrates its dignity;

[8] Pædagog. iii. 1.

and to wish to honour a spiritual being by earthly matter, is nothing but to dishonour it by sensuousness." It is evident, from what we have said, how foreign to the notions of the Christians of this period, images of Christ must in general have been. Heathens, who, like Alexander Severus[9], saw something Divine in Christ, and sects, which mixed heathenism and Christianity together, were the first who made use of images of Christ; as for instance, the Gnostic sect of the followers of Carpocratian, who put his image beside those of Plato and Aristotle.

The use of religious images among the Christians, did not proceed from their ecclesiastical, but from their domestic life. In the intercourse of daily life, the Christians saw themselves every where surrounded by objects of heathen mythology, or by such as shocked their moral and Christian feelings. Similar objects adorned the walls of chambers, the drinking-vessels, and the signet-rings (on which the heathen had constantly idolatrous images), to which, whenever they pleased, they could address their devotions; and the Christians naturally felt themselves obliged to replace these objects, which wounded their moral and religious feelings, with others more suited to those feelings. Therefore, they gladly put the likeness of a shepherd, carrying a lamb upon his shoulders, on their cups, as a symbol of the Redeemer, who saves the sinners that return to Him, according to the parable in the Gospel[1]. And Clement of Alexandria says, in reference to the signet-rings of the Christians[2], "Let our signet-rings consist of a dove (the emblem of the Holy Ghost), or a fish[3], or a ship sailing towards heaven (the emblem of the Christian Church, or of individual Christian souls); or a lyre (the emblem of Christian joy); or an anchor (the emblem of Christian hope); and he who is a fisherman, let him remember the apostle, and the children who are dragged out from the

[9] Thus Eusebius says, (H. E. vii. 18.) that heathens were the first who made pictures of Christ, St. Peter, and St. Paul, whom they looked upon, after their heathen notions, as benefactors of mankind. This may easily be explained from the spirit of religious eclecticism, which then existed.

[1] Tertullian, de Pudicitia, c. vii. "Procedant ipsæ picturæ calicum vestrorum." C. x. "Pastor, quem in calice depingis." The likeness of Christ upon a cup does not appear to have suited the Montanistic asceticism.

[2] Pædagog. iii. 246, 247.

[3] This refers to the same idea as that of the fisherman, with a play on the anagram of the name of Christ, ΙΧΘΥΣ—Ἰησους Χριστος Θεου Υἱος Σωτηρ.

water[4]; for those men ought not to engrave idolatrous forms, to whom the use of them is forbidden; those can engrave no sword and no bow, who seek for peace; the friends of temperance cannot engrave drinking-cups." And yet, perhaps, religious images made their way from domestic life into the churches, as early as the end of the third century, and the walls of the churches were painted in the same way. The council of Elvira set itself against this innovation, as an abuse, for it made the following order: "Objects of reverence and worship shall not be painted on the walls[5]." It is probable that the visible representation of the cross found its way very early into domestic and ecclesiastical life. This token was remarkably common among them; it was used to consecrate their rising and their going to bed, their going out and their coming in, and all the actions of daily life; it was the sign which Christians made involuntarily, whenever any thing of a fearful nature surprised them[6]. This was a mode of expressing, by means perceptible to the senses, the purely Christian idea, that all the actions of Christians, as well as the whole course of their life, must be sanctified by faith in the crucified Jesus, and by dependence upon Him, and that this faith is the most powerful means of conquering all evil, and preserving oneself against it. But here also again, men were too apt to confuse the idea and the token which represented it, and they attributed the effects of faith in the crucified Redeemer to the outward sign, to which

[4] This was an allusion to the Christians, whom Christ, the Divine teacher—the θειος παιδαγωγος—leads to regeneration by means of baptism.

[5] "Ne, quod colitur et adoratur, in parietibus depingatur." Concil. Illiberit. c. xxxiii.* The explanation of this canon, we confess, cannot altogether be determined with certainty. There is, in fact, a double uncertainty in it: We may understand the words, 'quod colitur et adoratur,' of religious objects generally, or, in a more restricted sense, of objects of peculiar reverence, such as portraits of Christ, or symbolical representations of God and the Trinity; and we may also understand 'the walls' in two different ways—the walls of churches or those of houses.

[6] Cf. Tertullian, de Corona Milit. c. iii. [From the last words of this chapter of Tertullian it would seem, that they made the sign of the cross on the forehead: "Frontem crucis signaculo terimus." See also ad Uxor. ii. 5.—H. J. R.]

[* I find this to be Can. xxxvi. Those who are curious in these matters, will be somewhat entertained by the learned note of Mendoza on this canon, to prove that it refers only to pictures of God. He labours hard through nine folio pages of double columns, to prove his point, and to defend the use of images. Concilia a Labbe et Cossart. Paris. 1671. vol. i. p. 1227.—H. J. R.]

they ascribed a supernatural, sanctifying, and preservative power; an error of which we find traces as early as the third century.

We now pass from the consideration of the places of public worship, to that of the seasons of worship, and the festivals of the early Christians.

(c.) *Seasons of Public Worship and Festivals.*

It is here shown again that the Gospel, as it remodelled the former conceptions of the priesthood, of worship in general, and of holy places, also entirely changed the then views of sacred seasons. And here again, also, the character of the theocracy of the New Testament revealed itself, a theocracy spiritualized, ennobled, and freed from its outward garb of sense, and from the limits which bounded its generalization[7]. The Jewish laws relating to their festivals, were not merely abrogated by the Gospel in such a manner as to transfer these festivals to *different seasons*; but they were *entirely abolished*, as far as fixing religious worship to particular times is concerned. The laws of the Sabbath, like all the rest of the ceremonial laws of the Jews, could only arise again in Christianity, by being spiritualized and ennobled, inasmuch as *every day* was now to be sanctified by the dependence of the whole life on God through Christ, on every day, and by the sanctification which the prayers of *the heart* shed over the whole of a Christian day. Inasmuch as the Christian every day pursued the calling entrusted to him by God, with godly feelings, preserving his heart in purity from all inward contact with what is ungodly, and seeking constantly to keep holy the name of his Lord in thought, word, and deed—every day was to be a true Sabbath to him. St. Paul expressly declares all sanctifying of certain seasons, as far as men deduced this from the Divine command, to be Jewish and unevangelical, and to be like returning to the slavery of the law, and to captivity *to outward* precepts. Such was the opinion of the early Church. At first the Churches assembled every day; as for instance, the first Church of Jerusalem, which assembled daily for prayer in common, and for the public consideration of the Divine word, for the

[7] [Von den Schranken des Particularismus und von der fleischlichen Hülle frei gemachten neutestamentlichen Theokratie.—Germ. Literally, "freed from the limits of particularism, and from its fleshly covering."—H. J. R.]

common celebration of the Lord's Supper and the agapæ, as well as to maintain the connexion between the common head of the spiritual body of the Church and themselves, and between one another as members of this body. Traces of this are also found in later times, in the daily assembling of the Churches for the purpose of hearing the Scriptures read, and of celebrating the communion. Although, in order to meet the wants of human nature generally, consisting as it does of sense as well as soul, and those of a large body of Christians in particular, who were only in a state of education, and were to be brought up to the ripeness of Christian manhood, men soon selected definite times for religious admonitions, and to consecrate them to a fuller occupation with religious things, as well as to public devotion, with the intention, that the influence of *these definite times* should animate and sanctify the rest of their lives, and that Christians who withdrew themselves from the distractions of business on these days, and collected their hearts before God in the stillness of solitude, as well as in public devotion, might make these seasons of service to the other parts of their life;—yet this was *in itself, and of itself*, nothing unevangelic. It was only a dropping down from the purely spiritual point of view, on which even the Christian, as he still carries about two natures in himself, cannot always maintain himself to the carnal; a dropping down, which became constantly more necessary, the more the fire of the *first* animation, and the warmth of the *first* love of the Christians, died away. It was no more unevangelic than the gradual limitation of the exercise of many rights, belonging to the common priesthood of all Christians, to a certain class in the Church, which circumstances rendered necessary [8]. But just as the unevangelic made its appearance, when men supposed the existence of a separate *caste of priests* in the Church, which stood upon Divine right, when they forgot the common Christian priesthood in the consideration of this peculiar caste of priests, when they introduced a contrast between secular and spiritual persons among Christians, so also, in this matter, the unevangelic appeared, when men supposed certain days distinguished from others and hallowed *by Divine right*, when they introduced a distinction between holy and common days into the life of the Christian, and in this distinction forgot his calling to sanctify *all*

[8] See above, p. 196.

days alike. The confusion between the Old and the New Testament notions manifested itself here in the same manner and at the same time, as that which relates to the priesthood.

When the Montanists (see below) wished to introduce and make imperative new fasts, which were fixed to *certain days*, the Epistle to the Galatians was very properly brought to oppose them; but Tertullian, who stood on the boundary between the original pure evangelic times and those when the intermixture of Jewish and Christian notions first took place, confuses here the views of the two religions, because he makes the evangelical to consist, not in a *wholly different method* of considering festivals altogether, but in the celebration of *different particular* festivals; and he makes the Judaizing, which the apostle condemns, to consist only in the observation of the *Jewish*, instead of the peculiarly Christian festivals[9].

The *weekly and the yearly* festivals originally arose from the selfsame fundamental idea, which was the centre-point of the whole Christian life; the idea of imitating Christ, the crucified and the risen,—to follow Him in his death, by appropriating to ourselves, in penitence and faith, the effects of his death, by dying to ourselves and to the world—to follow Him in his resurrection, by rising again with Him by faith in Him, and by his power, to a new and holy life, devoted to God, which, beginning here below in the seed, is matured in heaven. Hence the festival of joy was the festival of the resurrection; and the preparation for it, the remembrance of the sufferings of Christ, with mortification and crucifixion of the flesh, was the day of *fasting* and *penitence.* Thus in the week the *Sunday* was the *joyful festival;* and the *preparation* for it was a day of penitence and prayer, consecrated to remembrance of the sufferings of Christ and the preparations for them; and this was celebrated on the Friday; and thus also the *yearly* festivals were to celebrate the resurrection of Christ, and the operations of the Redeemer after He had risen again; the preparation for this day was in commemoration of the sufferings and fastings of our Saviour. From this general point of view we shall now proceed to consider the several weekly and yearly festivals in particular.

Opposition to Judaism introduced the particular festival of Sunday very early indeed into the place of the Sabbath; the first

[9] Tertullian, de Jejuniis, c. xiv.

trace of this custom is in the Acts xx. 7, where we find the Church assembled together on the first day in the week[1], and again somewhat *later*, in Rev. i. 10, where it is hardly possible to understand the day of judgment by the words "the Lord's day." Allusion is also made to the festival of Sunday, as a symbol of a new life, consecrated to the Lord, in opposition to the old Sabbath, in the epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians[2]. "If they who were brought up under the Old Testament have attained to a new hope, and no longer keep Sabbaths holy, but have consecrated their life to the day of the Lord, on which also our life rose up in Him, how shall we be able to live without Him?" Sunday was distinguished as a day of joy by the circumstances, that men did not fast upon it, and that they prayed standing up, and not kneeling, as Christ had raised up fallen man to heaven again through his resurrection. The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic Church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday. Perhaps at the end of the second century a false application of this kind had begun to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered labouring on Sunday as a sin[3].

And further, two other days in the week, Friday and Wednesday, particularly the former, were consecrated to the remembrance of the sufferings of Christ, and of the circumstances preparatory to them, congregations were held on them, and a fast till three o'clock in the afternoon, but nothing was positively appointed concerning them; in respect to joining in these solemnities every one consulted his own convenience or inclination. Such fasts, joined with prayer, were considered as the watches of

[1] The passage is not entirely convincing, because the impending departure of the apostle may have united the little Church in a brotherly parting-meal, on occasion of which the apostle delivered his last address, although there was no particular celebration of a Sunday in the case. The passage from 1 Cor. xvi. 2, is still less convincing; for all may be quite competently explained, if we only consider the passage as referring to the beginning of the civil week.

[2] Sect. 9. [I am unable to find the exact expressions here given; although something of the kind is found in § 9.—H. J. R.]

[3] We may draw this conclusion from the words of Tertullian, de Orat. § 23. "Solo die dominico resurrectionis non ab isto tantum (from kneeling) sed omni anxietatis habitu et officio cavere debemus, *differentes etiam negotia, ne quem diabolo locum demus.*"

the "milites Christi" on their post by the Christians, (who compared their calling to a warfare—the militia Christi,) and they were "stationes"—and the days, on which they took place, were called "Dies Stationum[4]."

The Jewish Christian Churches, [i. e. Churches consisting of Jewish converts] although they received the festival of Sunday, retained also that of the Sabbath; and from them the custom spread abroad in the Oriental Church, of distinguishing this day, as well as the Sunday, by not fasting and by praying in an erect posture; in the Western Churches, particularly the Roman, where opposition to Judaism was the prevailing tendency, this very opposition produced the custom of celebrating the Saturday in particular as a fast day[5]. This difference in customs would of course be striking, where members of the Oriental Church spent their

[4] The name "statio" occurs first in Hermas Pastor, lib. iii. Similitud. v. and often in Tertullian. "Statio" was the usual name for these half-fast days, in opposition to the proper "jejunia." Tertullian de Jejuniis, c. xiv.

[5] Tertullian, de Jejun. c. xiv. "Quanquam vos etiam sabbatum si quando continuatis, nunquam nisi in Paschate jejunandum." Tertullian, as a Montanist, is here making a reproach to his Romish adversaries, that they deprived the Sabbath of its becoming honour; and sometimes continued their fasts from Friday to the Saturday, whereas they ought only to make one exception to its observance as a feast, that is, in the case of the Passover (i. e. in Easter week). This same custom, namely, that of continuing the fast from Friday on to Saturday, which Tertullian here argues against, as a Montanist, we find in Victorinus, bishop of Petabium, in Pannonia (Pettau, in Stiria,) at the end of the third century. It is mentioned in his Fragments on the Creation, first published by Cave, Hist. Lit. He calls this continuance "superpositio jejunii." The fast on the Sabbath appears here the preparation for the festival of the communion on the Sunday, in opposition to the Jewish festival on the Sabbath, which Christianity had abolished. "Hoc die solemus superponere; idcirco ut die dominico cum gratiarum actione ad panem (the Lord's Supper) exeamus. Et parasceue superpositio fiat, ne quid cum Judæis Sabbatum observare videamur." Galland. Bibl. Patr. T. iv.; and Routh, Reliquiæ Sacræ, Oxon. 1815, vol. iii. p. 237.

The council of Elvira opposes the error of celebrating the Sabbath as a festival, by prolonging the fast of the Friday, and making a fast-day of Saturday also—c. xxvi. "Errorem placuit corrigi, ut omni sabbati die superpositiones celebremus."—When in later days men had lost sight of the original notions of the first Christian ages, and were unable to find the reason for the custom of fasting on the Sabbath (Saturday,) in the Romish Church, they began to invent stories to explain it; as, for instance, that St. Peter had fasted on that day, as a preparation for his dispute with Simon Magus *.

[* The reader will observe that *Sabbath*, in this note, is used for Saturday, as the Jewish Sabbath. Dr. Neander appears to have deduced the proper sense from the passage of Tertullian, which is not, however, without its difficulties, especially in its immediate context. I beg to refer to the notes of Valesius on Eusebius, v. 24, which will throw some light on the subject, and also to Thorndike on Religious Assemblies,

Sabbath-day in the Western Church. It was only too soon that men lost sight of the principle of the apostolic Church, which retained the unity of faith and spirit, in the bond of love, but allowed all kinds of difference in external things; and then they began to require uniformity even in these things. Tertullian spoke on this controversy with Christian moderation, before his conversion to Montanism. He said of the few defenders of the Oriental custom, "The Lord will bestow his grace upon them, so that they may either give in, or follow their own opinion without bitterness towards others[6]. The learned Hippolytus was induced, as early as the beginning of the third century, to write upon this controversy between the Oriental and the Occidental Church[7].

The first *yearly festivals* of the Christians proceeded from similar views; and yet at first *the* contrast, which had in early times the most powerful influence on the development as well of the churchly life as of the doctrines of Christianity, is here peculiarly prominent—I mean the contrast between the Jewish Churches and those of the Gentile converts. The former retained all the Jewish festivals as well as the whole ceremonial law, although by degrees they introduced into them a Christian meaning which spontaneously offered itself. On the contrary, there was probably no yearly festival at all, from the beginning, among the heathen converts, for no trace of any thing of the sort is found in the whole of the New Testament[8].

[6] C. xxiii. de Oratione.

[7] Cf. Hieronymi Ep. lxxii. ad Vital.

[8] In 1 Cor. v. 7, there is no allusion at all to a peculiar Christian Passover of the Corinthian Church, but merely a contrast shown between a purification of the heart, proceeding from faith, and the *outward* Jewish festivals. [But St. Paul in 1 Cor. xvi. 8. says, "But I will tarry at *Ephesus* until *Pentecost*." Now this is worth observing: he is writing to a Church among *the Heathen*, and reckons by this feast. May we not suppose from this, that the Heathen converts made this season a solemn time also, and reckoned their years in some degree by it? H. J. R.]

p. 274. The following extract from Bishop Kaye, on Tertullian, (p. 409, first edition,) will serve in part to confirm as well as explain Dr. Neander's note: "Even the Montanists, anxious as they were to introduce a more rigorous discipline in the observance of fasts, when they kept their two weeks of Xerophagiæ, did not fast on the Saturday and Sunday. The Saturday before Easter-day was, however, an exception; that *was* observed as a fast. The custom of observing every Saturday as a fast, which became general throughout the western Church, does not appear to have existed in Tertullian's time. That men who, like our author, on all occasions contended that the ritual and ceremonial law of Moses had ceased, should observe the seventh day of the week as a festival, is perhaps to be ascribed to a desire of conciliating the Jewish converts."

In a note on this passage, Bishop Kaye remarks, that the Gentiles fasted on a Saturday. H. J. R.]

The Passover of the Old-Testament was easily ennobled and converted to a Passover which suited the New Testament, by merely substituting the idea of deliverance from spiritual bondage, that is, from the slavery of sin, for that of deliverance from earthly bondage[9]. The paschal lamb was a type of Christ, by whom that deliverance was wrought. These representations went on the supposition, that Christ had partaken his last meal with his disciples, as a proper Passover, at the very time that the Jews were celebrating theirs. This Passover was, therefore, always celebrated on the night between the 14th and 15th of the Jewish month Nisan, as a remembrance at the same time of the last supper of Christ. This was the fundamental notion of the whole Jewish-Christian Passover, on which all the rest was built. The day following this Passover was consecrated to the remembrance of the sufferings of Christ, and the third day from it to the remembrance of his resurrection. On the contrary, in the greater number of heathen Churches, as soon as men began to celebrate yearly festivals (a time which cannot be determined very precisely), they followed the method observed in the weekly festivals. They appointed one Sunday in the year for the festival of the Resurrection, and one Friday as a day of penitence and fasting preparatory to this Sunday, in remembrance of the sufferings of Christ; and they gradually lengthened this time of penitence and fasting, as a preparation for that high and joyful festival. In these Churches they were more inclined to take up a kind of antithetical turn against the Jewish festivals, than to graft Christian ones upon them. It was *far from their notions* to think of observing a yearly Passover with the Jews. The following was the view which they took of the matter. Every typical feast has lost its true meaning by the realization of that which is typified; in the sacrifice of Christ, the Lord's Supper, as the feast of the new covenant, has taken the place of that of the old covenant. Men seem here to have been inclined, in their opposition to Judaism, to come to the following opinion, for which they might bring at least "primâ facie" evidence from the Gospel of St. John, namely, that our Saviour did not celebrate the last Supper at the same time with the Jews, but one day earlier.

[9] The Alexandrians, who translated the word πασχα by ἑορτη διαβητηριος, had already found in the Passover a symbol of the διαβασις απο του αισθητου εἰς το νοητον, a deliverance of the spirit from the bondage of the senses.

This difference of outward customs, between the Jewish-Christian Churches and the Churches allied to them, on the one hand, and the Heathen-Christian Churches founded by St. Paul, on the other, existed at first without its being supposed that external things of this nature were of importance enough to lead to a controversy: they thought, that the kingdom of God did not consist in eating and drinking, or in any kind of external things.

This difference, together with many others, between the Churches of Asia Minor and the Romish Church, was first discussed on occasion of a visit paid by Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna, to Anicetus, the bishop of Rome[1]. Polycarp appealed to having celebrated such a Passover with St. John, whose disciple he was; Anicetus, on the other hand, appealed to the circumstance, that his predecessors (in a Church consisting of heathen converts, who followed St. Paul) had established nothing of the sort[2]. But as it was not supposed that the apostles had entirely coincided in such external things, or thought that uniformity in these things was necessary, it was thought that differences in these respects might continue without prejudice to Christian communion and unity. As a proof that the bond of unity was not broken by this, nor by other differences, it would seem, of still greater importance, Anicetus allowed Polycarp to celebrate the communion in his Church instead of himself.

[1] At all events we may conclude from the words of Irenæus, recorded by Eusebius, that the determination of the controversy about Easter was not the object of Polycarp's journey to Rome; no controversies were as yet in existence on the subject, and it was only incidentally, in touching on other controversies, that this was also treated of. It is not at all clear either, although it is possible, that a deliberation on those other points of difference was the object of this journey. More importance has been attached at times to this journey, than is warranted by history.

[2] It is a pity that Eusebius has not given us the whole of the letter of Irenæus; all depends on what we supply to the words τηρειν and μη τηρειν; something must be supplied, which formed the whole subject of the controversy, and which makes its appearance in the letter of Polycrates of Ephesus, preserved by Eusebius*, namely, την τεσσαρεσκαιδεκατην του πασχα; i. e. the celebration of *the 14th day of Nisan*, as the day of the Passover; and it depended on the observance of this day, whether the Passover was kept or not. If a man did not trouble himself about the 14th day of Nisan, he considered the old feast of the Passover utterly abolished, and deduced his Christian paschal festival from a totally different view of the case.

* [Euseb. v. 24. The notes of Valesius on this letter are very valuable: I have already referred to them on the subject of fasting on Saturday. H. J. R.]

In later years, about A.D. 171, this difference again became the subject of controversy: Melito of Sardis, writing apparently *for* the Jewish-Christian custom, and Apollinaris of Hierapolis, *against* it[3]. But still there was no rupture of the Churches on this account: individual Christians out of Churches, where the Passover was celebrated after the Jewish notions, found a brotherly reception in Rome, were allowed to celebrate the Passover there according to their own opinions, and were still admitted to the communion. Things remained in this state till the time of Victor, bishop of Rome[4].

But under this bishop, about A.D. 190, the controversy broke out afresh: on the one side was ranged the Church of Rome, in agreement with those of Cæsarea in Palestine, Jerusalem, Tyre, and Alexandria; on the other were the Churches of Asia Minor, at the head of which was Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus[5].

The points which were controverted on this occasion, were the following:—

(1.) Must the yearly Passover be retained, and must we therefore follow the Jews in regard to the time of celebrating this festival?

The opponents of this opinion—at least Apollinaris, Clement of Alexandria, and Hippolytus, according to the fragments preserved in the Alexandrian Chronicle, which we are not entitled to declare spurious—maintained the following position:—That the last supper of Jesus was no Passover; for, according to the account in the Gospel of St. John, Jesus kept it on the 13th Nisan, and on the following day, which was appointed for the Jewish Passover, He offered up that sacrifice for mankind, which was typified by the Passover, and thence there is the less reason

[3] Euseb. iv. 26.

[4] From the circumstance that Irenæus, in his letter to Victor, represents only the Romish bishops before Soter as models of toleration, I formerly concluded, that under this latter (Soter) things had immediately been changed; but if we observe that in Irenæus the words οἱ (προ) Σωτηρος πρεσβυτεροι and οἱ προ σου πρεσβυτεροι correspond to each other, we shall see clearly that no particular weight can be attached to the first expression. Irenæus only means to say thus much: this difference of opinion, and therefore this toleration, did not first begin under the later bishops, but were in existence before Soter.

[5] It might perhaps surprise us to find the Churches of Palestine on this side, but we must recollect that the Church of Cæsarea, from the very beginning, had consisted chiefly of heathen converts, and that the Church of Jerusalem had assumed more of the heathen-Christian form during the reign of Hadrian.

to suppose it possible that Christians should celebrate any festival of the Passover.

(2.) When the Jewish-Christian party appointed the day after the Passover for the commemoration of the sufferings of Christ, let it fall on what day of the week it might; the other party answered, it must *always* be on a Friday.

(3.) When the one party appointed the third day after the Passover for the commemoration of the resurrection, let it fall on what day of the week it might; the other party settled that this must take place on a Sunday.

(4.) While the one party was keeping its festival of the Passover, the other party took an exactly opposite turn; for they were at this very time preparing themselves for the celebration of the sufferings of Christ, by means of a day of penitence and fasting; and this time of contrition only ended with their partaking of the communion on the morning of the feast of the resurrection [6].

The Romish bishop, animated by the hierarchical spirit which we have before observed in the Romish Church, renounced communion with the Churches of Asia Minor, in consequence of this insignificant difference; but this unchristian conduct must have experienced a strong opposition from the evangelical spirit which then existed. Irenæus wrote him a letter in the name of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne, in which he blamed this conduct severely. He holds up the example of his predecessor Anicetus to shame Victor, and declares to him, "We live together in peace, without regarding these differences; and the difference in our regulations about the fasts, makes our agreement in faith shine forth more clearly." In the same letter, or in another work composed in consequence of these controversies, he says, "The

[6] The διαταξεις αποστολικαι, quoted by Epiphanius, Hæres. lxx. § 11, which appear to be very different from those that remain to us, wished to moderate this opposition, and to defend the followers of the Jewish-Christian custom against the reproach of Judaism; and therefore they represented the case as if the *Jewish* Passover (comp. Deut. xvi. 3.) were a meal of humiliation, and the *Christian* a festival of joy; as if the fast of the Christians, on the following day, on which the Jews had crucified the Redeemer, exactly corresponded to the Jewish meal of joy. The apostles say, "While the Jews are holding their feast, you must fast and mourn on their account, because they crucified Christ on the day of their feast; but while they are fasting, eating their unleavened bread with bitter herbs, you are to hold your feast." Οταν εκεινοι εὐωχωνται, ὑμεις νηστευοντες ὑπερ αὐτων πενθειτε, ὁτι ἐν τῃ ἡμερᾳ της ἑορτης τον Χριστον ἐσταυρωσαν, και ὁταν αὐτοι πενθωσι, τα ἀζυμα ἐσθιοντες ἐν πικρισιν, ὑμεις εὐωχεισθε.

apostles commanded us to judge no man in respect of meats or drink, or fasts, new moons, or Sabbaths. Whence, then, come controversies? whence divisions? We celebrate feasts, but in the leaven of wickedness and evil, because we divide the Church of God, and observe outward matters, while we leave the weightier matters of love and faith untouched. We have nevertheless learned from the prophets, that such feasts and such fasts are displeasing to the Lord." We observed before that a fast formed the introduction to the Passover, and this was the only fast formerly established by the Church. The necessity of this fast was deduced from Matt. ix. 15, but it was by a carnal interpretation of the passage, and an application of it quite contrary to its real sense[7]. The duration of this fast, however, was not determined; the imitation of the temptation of our Lord for forty days introduced the custom of fasting forty hours in some places, which afterwards was extended to forty days[8], and thus the fast of forty days, the *Quadragesimal fast* arose.

The festival of *Pentecost* (*Whitsuntide*) was closely connected with that of the resurrection, and this was dedicated to commemorating the first visible effects of the operations of the glorified Christ upon human nature, now also ennobled by him, the lively proofs of his resurrection and reception into glory—and therefore Origen joins the festivals of the resurrection and of Pentecost together as one whole[9]. The means of transition from an Old Testament festival to one befitting the New Testament, were here near at hand. The first-fruits of harvest in the kingdom of nature—the first fruits of harvest in the kingdom of grace—the law of the *letter* from Mount Sinai—the new law of the *Spirit* from the heavenly Jerusalem. This festival originally embraced the whole season of fifty days from Easter, and

[7] The passage does not relate to the time of Christ's suffering, but to the time when He should be with his disciples no more. As long as they enjoyed his society they were to give themselves up to joy, and to be disturbed in it by no forced asceticism. But a time of sorrow was to follow this time of joy, although only for a season, after which a time of higher and imperishable joy, in invisible communion with Him, was to follow. John xvi. 22.

[8] Irenæus ap. Euseb. v. 24.

[9] Origen, c. Cels. viii. c. xxii. (p. 392, ed. Spenc.) where he places the yearly festivals of the πασχα and the πεντηκοστη, with the weekly festivals, the παρασκευαι and the κυριακαι, and considering the festival of the resurrection as the beginning of that of Whitsuntide, he says, "He who can truly assert, 'God hath raised us again with him, and placed us in the kingdom of heaven,' keeps one continual Passover."

was celebrated like a Sunday, that is to say, no fasts were kept during the whole of it, and men prayed standing, and not kneeling, and perhaps also in some places assemblies of the Church were held, and the communion was celebrated every day[1]. Afterwards two peculiar points of time, the ascension of Christ and the effusion of the Holy Spirit, were selected from this whole interval.

These were the only festivals generally celebrated at that time, as the passage cited from Origen proves. The fundamental notion of the whole Christian life, which referred every thing to the suffering, the resurrection, and the glorification of Christ, as well as the adherence, or, on the other hand, the opposition to the Jewish celebration of festivals, were the cause, that these were the only general festivals. The notion of a *birth-day festival* was far from the ideas of the Christians of this period in general; they looked upon the second birth as the true birth of men. The case must have been somewhat different with the birth of the Redeemer; human nature was to be sanctified by him from its first development; but then this last notion could not at first come so prominently forward among the early Christians, because so many of them were first converted to Christianity when well advanced in years, after some decisive excitement of their life, but then it may have entered generally into domestic life, though at first gradually. Nevertheless, we find in this period apparently one trace of Christmas as a festival. Its history is intimately connected with the history of a kindred festival: the festival of the *Manifestation of Jesus* in his character of Messiah, his consecration to the office of Messiah by

[1] From Tertullian, de Oratione, c. xxiii., where he had said that men abstained from worldly business on Sunday, and where he afterwards attributes the whole solemnities of Sunday to the Pentecost, we might be led to suppose, that this abstinence from worldly business lasted during the whole time of Pentecost, which is hard to believe. In his treatise de Idololatria, c. xiv. where he wishes to restrain Christians from participating in heathen feasts, he says, "Excerpe singulas solemnitates nationum, Pentecostem implere non poterunt." The first trace of a limitation of the Pentecostal festival to one day, is in the 43rd Canon of the Council of Elvira. This canon is, we confess, very obscure; but the most natural interpretation of it is by supposing that some persons had selected only the festival of the ascension out of the whole Pentecost. On the contrary, under the name of Pentecost, the council only understood the festival of the Effusion of the Holy Spirit, and ordered that the 50th day after Easter should be kept holy, and accused the first-mentioned party, who had only made a false application of the name Pentecost, of having departed from the authority of Scripture, "Ut cuncti diem Pentecostes post Pascha celebremus, non quadragesimam, nisi quinquagesimam."

the baptism of John, and the beginning of his public ministry, as the Messiah, which was afterwards called the εορτη των επιφανιων, or της επιφανειας του Χριστου. We find in later times that these festivals extended themselves in opposite directions, that of Christmas spreading from west to east, and the other from east to west[2]. Clement of Alexandria merely relates, that the Gnostic sect of the Basilidians celebrated the festival of the Epiphany at Alexandria, in his time. We can hardly suppose that this sect invented the festival, although they may have had some dogmatical reasons for celebrating it, for it is highly improbable that the Catholic Church should have afterwards received a festival from the Gnostics; and these Gnostics most probably received it from the Jewish-Christian Churches in Palestine or Syria. It had apparently a Jewish-Christian origin, for this time of our Saviour's life would appear the most important to the notions of the Jewish-Christians; and the Gnostics would afterwards explain it according to their own ideas. Clement speaks at the same time of those who attempted to fix not only the year, but even *the day* of our Saviour's birth; but he appears to blame this proceeding, as an idle and unfruitful pursuit, in which they could arrive at no certainty. He does not, however, say, that they celebrated the day which they attempted to fix as a festival; but it is still probable that if they reckoned the day so accurately, they celebrated it as a festival, and the context of the passage in which it is mentioned seems to indicate that Clement had some meaning of this sort[3]. But then this could not have been done by the Gnostics, of whom he speaks

[2] The feast of the Epiphany, as the festival of the baptism of Christ, was held in great reverence at the end of the fourth century at *Antioch*, while the introduction of the festival of Christmas, which came from the west, found great opposition there. In many of the eastern Churches, where Christmas was first introduced at the end of the fourth century, or even later, but where the festival of the baptism of Christ had long been known, they joined the two festivals together afterwards; as in the western Churches they gave a somewhat different turn to the new festival of the Epiphany, which came to them from the east. The Donatists rejected the Epiphany, as an innovation that came from the eastern Churches: "Quia nec orientali ecclesiæ, ubi apparuit illa stella, communicant." Augustin. Sermo 202. § 2. I mention this now rather prematurely, but merely in some degree as a proof of the supposition I have thrown out, and I shall have to enlarge on the matter in the succeeding period.

[3] Clemens, Stromat. i. p. 340: εἰσι δε οἱ περιεργοτερον τῃ γενεσει του σωτηρος ἡμων οὐ μονον το ἐτος, ἀλλα και την ἡμεραν προστιθεντες, οἱ δε ἀπο βασιλειδου και του βαπτισματος αὐτου την ἡμεραν ἑορταζουσι.

immediately afterwards, for the celebration of the birth-day of our Saviour would have been in flat contradiction to the rest of their system[4].

We proceed now to consider the several parts of the Christian worship.

(d.) *On the several parts of the Christian worship.*

The character of a spiritual worship of God distinguished the Christian worship from that of other religions, which consisted in symbolical pageantry and lifeless ceremonies. As a general elevation of the spirit and the heart to God, as well as the enlightenment of the spirit and the sanctification of the heart, were the object of *every thing* in this religion, instruction and edification, through a common study of the Divine word, and through prayer in common, were the leading features in the Christian worship. And in this respect it might in its form adhere to the arrangements made about the congregations in the Jewish Synagogues, in which also the element of a spiritual religious worship was the prevailing ingredient. As the reading of portions of the Old Testament had formed the ground-work of religious instruction in the Jewish synagogues, this custom also passed into the Christian congregations. First the Old Testament, and especially the prophetic parts of it, were read as things that pointed to the Messiah; then followed *the Gospels*, and after that *the Epistles of the apostles.*

The reading of the Scriptures was of still greater consequence then, because it was desirable that every Christian should be acquainted with them, and yet, by reason of the rarity and dearness of manuscripts, and the poverty of a great proportion of the Christians—or, perhaps also, because all were not able to read—the Bible itself could not be put into the hands of all. Frequent *hearing* was therefore with many to supply the place of their own *reading.* The Scriptures were therefore read *in the language*

[4] [The Christian festivals, as compared with those of the Jews and the heathen, are succinctly considered in an essay by Dr. Ullman, appended to Creuzer's Symbolik. vol. iv. There are some interesting remarks in this essay, but it does not profess to treat the subject with chronological accuracy. The work of Augusti is the grand store-house of information on this point. Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Christlichen Archäologie. Leips. 8 vols. 1817—1826. For those who do not read German, the work of Bingham gives the fullest account of these matters. The little treatise also of Thorndike on the Service of God at Religious Assemblies is excellent, but it is unfortunately a scarce book. H. J. R.]

which all could understand, and that was, in most parts of the Roman empire, the Greek or the Latin. In very early times different *translations* of the Bible into Latin were in existence; as every one, who knew a little of Greek, found it needful to make the word of God his own in the language to which he was accustomed [5]. Where the Greek or the Latin language was understood only by a part of the Church, that is to say, by the educated classes, while the rest understood only their native language, as was the case in many Egyptian and Syrian towns, Church interpreters [6] were appointed, as in the Jewish synagogues, and they immediately translated what had been read into the language of the country, so that it might be intelligible to all [7].

After the reading of the Scripture there followed, as there had previously in the Jewish synagogues, short, and at first *very simple addresses* in familiar language, the momentary effusions of the heart, which contained an explanation and application of what had just been read. Justin Martyr expresses himself thus on the subject [8]: "After the reading of the Scriptures, the president (ὁ προεστως) instructs the people in a discourse, and incites them to the imitation of these good examples." Among the Greeks, where the taste was more rhetorical, the *sermon* from the very earliest times was of a more lengthened kind, and formed a very important part of the service [9].

Singing also passed from the Jewish service into that of the Christian Church. St. Paul exhorts the early Churches to sing spiritual songs. What was used for this purpose were partly the Psalms of the Old Testament, and partly *songs composed with*

[5] Augustin. de Doctrina Christiana, lib. ii. c. 2.

[6] The תּוּרְגְּמָנִים Dragomans.

[7] Ἑρμηνευται γλωσσης εἰς γλωσσαν, ἡ ἐν ταις ἀναγνωσεσιν, ἡ ἐν ταις προσομιλιαις. Epiphan. Expos. Fid. Cathol. c. xxi. Procopius, who suffered martyrdom under the persecution of Diocletian, united in his own person at Scythopolis in Palestine, the offices of a reader, an exorcist, and an interpreter (out of the Greek into the Syriac). See his Acta Martyr.

[8] Apol. ii. [Apol. I. § 77.]

[9] When Sozomen in the first half of the fifth century says: (Hist. Eccl. vii. 19.) that in the Romish Church there was no preaching at all, this must not be referred by any means to the first times; but, if the account be true, we must gather from it, that the prevalence of sensuous shows, and liturgical rites, had banished the sermons in later days. But an Oriental might easily be misled by false accounts from the West. And the source of his error might perhaps be, that the sermon did not occupy so prominent a place in the service in the Romish Church, as in the Greek.

this very object, especially songs of praise and thanks to God and Christ; and these, we know, Pliny found to be customary among the Christians. In the controversies with the Unitarians, about the end of the second century, and the beginning of the third, the hymns, in which from early times Christ had been honoured as a God, were appealed to. The power of Church singing over the heart was soon recognised, and hence those who wished to propagate any peculiar opinions, like Bardesanes or Paul of Samosata, endeavoured to spread them by means of hymns.

In compliance with the infirmities of human nature, composed as it is of sense and spirit, the Divine Founder of the Church, beside his word, ordained *two outward signs*, as symbols of the invisible communion, which existed between him,—the Head of the spiritual body,—and the faithful, its members; and also of the connection of *these members*, as *with him*, so also *with one another*. These were visible means to represent the invisible, heavenly benefits to be bestowed on the members of this body through him, and while man received in faith the sign presented to his senses, the enjoyment of that heavenly communion and those heavenly advantages was to gladden his inward heart. As nothing in all Christianity and in the whole Christian life stands isolated, but all forms *one whole*, proceeding from one centre, therefore also that which this outward sign represented must be something which should continue through the whole of the inward Christian life, something which, spreading itself forth from this one moment over the whole Christian life, should be capable of being especially excited again and promoted in return, by the influence of isolated moments. Thus, baptism was to be the sign of a first entrance into communion with the Redeemer, and with the Church, the first appropriation of those advantages, which Christ has bestowed on man, namely, of the forgiveness of sins and the inward union of life, which proceeds from it, as well as of the participation in a sanctifying Divine Spirit of life.—And the Lord's Supper was to be the sign of a constant continuance in this communion, in the appropriation and enjoyment of these advantages; and thus were represented the essentials of the whole inward Christian life, in its earliest rise and its continued progress. The whole peculiar spirit of Christianity was particularly stamped upon the mode in which these external things were administered, and the mode of their administration in return exerted a powerful influence on the whole nature of the Christian worship. The con-

nexion of the moments, represented by these signs, with the whole Christian life, the connexion of inward and Divine things with the outward act, was present to the lively Christian feelings of the first Christians; but it was here prejudicial in a practical point of view, as we observed before in regard to the doctrines about the Church, that men neglected to separate properly, and distinguish in their ideas, the things that came to their feelings in close connexion with one another.

We shall speak first of baptism.

Originally, as it was of great consequence that the Church should extend itself rapidly, those (among the Jews) who acknowledged their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, or (among the heathen) who acknowledged their belief in the *one God and in Jesus* the Messiah, were immediately baptized, as appears from the New Testament. It gradually came to be thought necessary to give those, who wished to be received into the Christian Church, a more careful instruction by way of preparation, and to subject them to a more severe trial. This whole class of persons were called "auditores," κατηχουμενοι, and these names implied that they were persons, who were receiving a preparatory instruction in Christianity, and who as yet were only in a state to listen to the Holy Scriptures, when they were read, and to the sermons. The time of probation must have been different according to the different condition of individuals; but the council of Elvira determined generally that it should last two years. In Origen we find two classes of these catechumens distinctly separated from each other.

1. Those who were for the first time receiving private instruction.

2. Those who were admitted to the congregations, and were under immediate preparation for baptism [1].

[1] Origen (c. Cels. lib. iii. c. 51.) clearly distinguishes those who were at first instructed κατ' ἰδιαν, and those, who after a proper probation were first admitted into the congregation, and had their peculiar place assigned them, ταγμα των ἀρτι ἀρχομενων και εἰσαγομενων και οὐδεπω το συμβολον του ἀποκεκαθαρθαι ἀνειληφοτων. One is led to inquire, whether there was also a third class in the time of Origen, which his obscure expressions render doubtful. I formerly thought that this was the case; but, on a second investigation, I find my opinion to have been unfounded. I thought that the ἁμαρτανοντες among the baptized persons, might be there mentioned in the character of Pœnitentes and distinguished from those before brought forward. The words, οἱα δ' ἐστιν αὐτοις αγωγη, which occur a little after, appear rather to refer to what goes before. The και indicates no distinction, and is not to be translated: "The conduct *also* which they pursue

There was no distinct Church officer for the private instruction of the catechumens; at Carthage it was customary to devolve this duty, after a previous probation, on some person, who was distinguished among the Church readers; at Alexandria, where men of education, even learned men, and persons accustomed to philosophical thought, often presented themselves for instruction in Christianity, it was necessary that the catechists themselves should be men of a learned education, and such as might be in a condition to remove the objections and the doubts of the heathen; this office, therefore, was there filled even by learned laymen, who were capable of it, and these catechists formed the foundation afterwards of an important theological school[1].

There is found in the New Testament[2] itself some trace of a *confession of faith*, which was made at baptism, and these confessions were afterwards enlarged, so as to oppose Jews, heathens, and heretics. These confessions of faith were supposed to include the essentials of Christianity, in which *all* Churches agreed. Men were persuaded, that the doctrine, expressed in these confessions of faith, descended from the tradition of the apostles, that it was the doctrine, which they had preached both "vivâ voce," and by their writings, but no one imagined, that the apostles had composed any such confession in so many words. In *this* sense it was called the κηρυγμα ἀποστολικον, or the παραδοσις ἀποστολικη; and the misunderstanding of this name afterwards[3] produced the fiction, that *the apostles* themselves had literally composed such a confession. This confession of faith was then pre-eminently named *symbolum*. The inquiry suggests itself whether, when men made use of the word "symbolum" in this case, they originally intended to use it in its general acceptation of "sign," with the notion that the words of this confession were the characteristic, representative sign of the Christian faith, or

with regard to the vicious members of the Church:" but it refers to the following *και*, and is to be translated thus, "And the conduct which they pursue, *as well with* regard to the vicious in general, *as* with regard to the ἀκολασταινοντες in particular," &c.

[1] We shall have more to say on this subject, when we treat of the school of Alexandria.

[2] See 1 Pet. iii. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 12. The latter passage is not so decidedly applicable, because it may relate to a confession made by Timothy from the fulness of his heart on a particular occasion, when he was chosen and consecrated as a missionary to the heathen.

[3] Rufin. Exposit. Symbol. Apostol.

whether they alluded to its more restricted sense, in reference to the συμβολον στρατιωτικον or "tessera militaris," the watchword of the Christian soldier communicated to each man at his first entrance into the service of Christ (the militia Christi). The first is the most probable, as far as we are able to trace the history of the phrase, because, when it is first applied to baptism, it is applied in its general sense[4].

The word συμβολον, "symbolum," which has so many meanings, might introduce many different religious allusions; the predominant one soon became that, which belonged to the favourite comparison of the first Christians between their calling and a "militia;" in the Alexandrian Church, on the contrary, where men were more ready to hunt after analogies with the heathen mysteries, which they did sometimes in a manner by no means suited to the simplicity of the Gospel, they rather caught at an illusion to the signal-word[5] of the initiated. Others thought of another meaning of the word "symbolum," namely, a commercial partnership[6], so that they imagined it to be the covenant-token of a spiritual community. The fable about an apostolic confession of faith afterwards paved the way for a notion, that the confession had been formed by contributions from each of the apostles, and then they used the word συμβολον or συμβολη in a different sense, namely, that of a contribution, to indicate a confession, which was composed from the contributions of the several apostles.

This confession of faith was imparted to the catechumens as containing the essentials of Christianity: many, who embraced the faith after much inquiry, and the comparison of different religious writings, as well as from their own study of the Bible,

[4] Thus Tertullian, de Pœnitentia, c. vi. says, that baptism, which by its own nature should be a "symbolum vitæ," became a "symbolum mortis" to those who received it without the proper dispositions. Also "symbolum" is used by him (Contra. Marcion. lib. v. c. 1), for a sign or token generally. This is done also in the letter of Firmilianus of Cæsarea, where the "symbolum trinitatis" is expressly distinguished from the confession of faith used as denoting the distinguishing form of baptism. (Baptismus) "cui nec symbolum trinitatis nec interrogatio legitima et ecclesiastica defuit." And besides, Cyprian, Ep. 76, ad Magnum, says, "eodem symbolo baptizare," to baptize with the same sign. Perhaps this word at first only denoted the "formula" of baptism, and was afterwards transferred to the confession of faith.

[5] Stromat. v. p. 585. The λουτρον is compared with the καθαρσια of the heathen mysteries.

[6] Augustin. Sermon. 212. "Symbolum inter se faciunt mercatores, quo eorum societas pacto fidei teneatur et vestra societas est commercium spiritualium."

of course needed it not as a means of learning the first principles of Christianity. The only service it could be of to them was, to create in them a persuasion, that the Church, which they were about to join, coincided in its doctrines with the Holy Scriptures, from which they had drawn their faith. Clement of Alexandria accordingly desires the heathen to persuade themselves, by inquiries into the Holy Scriptures, what the true Christian religion is, and where it is to be found, saying, that it only needs the use of their faculties, to distinguish the appearance from the reality, the real true doctrine that is deduced from the Holy Scripture from that which has merely a semblance of being so[7].

There were, nevertheless, others, who first learned what Christianity is from the confession of faith and the instruction which accompanied it, and who did not arrive till afterwards at a state in which they could compare what they had received from the teaching of men with the Holy Scriptures.—Such were the persons of whom Heracleon, the Gnostic, said[8], "They are first induced to believe on the Saviour, being brought to this faith by men, but when they come themselves to his words, they believe no longer on the mere testimony of men, but for the truth's sake." Clement of Alexandria[9] says also, "The first saving change from heathenism is *faith*, and faith is a short confession (so to speak) of the most urgent truths of religion. On this foundation knowledge is built, which is a settled conviction of the truths received through faith, by demonstrations taken from Scripture." Others, who were entirely uneducated and unable to read, could only learn from the mouths of others, and could never come to the knowledge of the Scriptures themselves; and yet the Divine truth which they received from the mouths of others, preserved themselves independently in their hearts, as a Divine power. Where the word once found entrance, another, and not human teacher, never failed to accompany it; and that was the Holy Ghost. "Many of us," says Clement of Alexandria, "have received the Divine doctrine by faith, without the use of writings, through the power of God."

[7] Stromat. vii. p. 754, 755. Δι' αὐτων των γραφων ἐκμανθανειν ἀποδεικτικως—διακρινειν τε τῃ καταληπτικῃ θεωριᾳ (by perceptive intuition*) και τῳ κυριωτατῳ λογισμῳ (deepest thought) το ἀληθες ἀπο του φαινομενου. [Pott. 888. Sylb. 320.]

[8] Origen, t. xiii. in Johann. § 52.

[9] Clemens Alex. Stromat. i. p. 319. Οἱ δε και ἀνευ γραμματων δυναμει τον περι Θεου δια πιστεως παρειληφαμεν λογον. [Pott. 376. Sylb. 137.]

* Anschauung. See Preface to vol. ii. of this Translation.

The few words of this confession of faith needed not, of course, to be communicated *in writing;* they were to pass into the heart of the catechumen, to go from living lips into his life, and to be declared by him as his own firm persuasion. But when men were inclined to introduce a higher notion into this custom of oral instruction in the faith, the origin of which is so simply explained, the idea was near at hand, that the Christian doctrine could not enter into a man from without, by means of letters, but that it must be written down in the heart, and there grow like some living thing. (Jer. xxxi. 33[1].) In after times, a love of mystery, quite foreign to the simplicity of the Gospel, which first arose in the Alexandrian Church, from its connexion with the heathen mysteries, and from the influence of a Neo-Platonic mysticism, deduced the following meaning from this custom: "That what is most holy could not be committed to writing, nor should it be produced before the uninitiated, and thus become desecrated[2];" and this they believed, in spite of the fact, that the holiest traditions of Divine doctrine, the Scriptures, might yet come into the hands of every heathen; and that the apologists themselves had no scruple in bringing forward the most sacred doctrines of Christianity to the heathens. When our Saviour warned us not to throw pearls before swine, this was a recommendation not to preach Divine things to men who are the slaves of their senses, at improper times and places; but it was by no means an exhortation to withdraw holy things carefully from the eyes of the profane multitude. The very nature of holy things is such, that they need fear no desecration; they remain what they are, however men's minds may be affected towards them; and man, by mocking that which is holy, can only desecrate that portion of his own nature which is akin to holiness.

This confession of faith was made by the catechumens at baptism, in answers to separate questions[3].

[1] So Augustin. p. 212. "Hujus rei significandæ causa audiendo symbolum discitur nec in tabulis vel in aliqua materia, sed in corde scribitur."

[2] The same mystical fancies and ceremonies, to which men attributed more than was originally intended by them, afterwards gave room for the invention of a sort of indefinite and unhistorical notion of a "disciplina arcani," from which, just because it was indefinite and groundless, men could create exactly whatever they pleased.

[3] According to the most natural interpretation of 1 Peter iii. 21, it contains an allusion to the questions proposed at baptism. Ἐπερώτημα is put metonymice,

The declaration of a moral engagement was also connected with the declaration of faith. The view then taken of baptism was this: it was supposed that the person to be baptized was departing out of the kingdom of evil, of darkness, and of Satan, whom he had hitherto served as a heathen, when devoted to his lusts, and that he was now entering into the kingdom of God. He was, therefore, solemnly to renounce all communion with the kingdom in which he had formerly served. He gave his hand to the bishop, and pledged himself[4] to renounce the devil and all his pomps (among which, at that time, the heathen plays and shows were particularly intended) and his angels; and this latter declaration was probably owing to the idea, that the heathen gods were evil spirits, which had seduced them[5]. This pledge was considered, according to the favourite comparison of these days, as the Christian soldier's oath, the "sacramentum militiæ Christianæ," by which the Christian bound himself to live and to fight as the "miles Dei et Christi."

This form of renunciation, which we find in the second century, must be carefully distinguished from *exorcism*, which could not have proceeded so early from the ideas of *Christian* antiquity. The notion of a deliverance from the power of the evil spirit, in a religious and moral point of view, of a departure from out of the kingdom of wickedness, and of a participation, through the new birth, in a Divine life, which should be victorious over the evil principle; this notion, we acknowledge, suits the original and essentially Christian ideas of the earliest times; but then, the whole act of baptism was to be a sensible representation of this idea, and therefore, there was no necessity to bring forward any thing individual and detached, to denote and

for the pledge that followed the questions. Tertullian, de Corona Milit. c. iii. "Amplius aliquid *respondentes*, quam Dominus in Evangelio determinavit." And again, Tertullian, de Resurrectione, c. xlviii. says of baptism, "Anima *responsione* sancitur." The council of eighty-seven bishops, in the time of Cyprian, says of these questions, "Sacramentum interrogare." ("Sacramentum" is here synonymous with "doctrina sacra.") In a letter of Dionysius of Alexandria, which is found in Eusebius, (vii. 9.) the following expression occurs: Ἐπερωτησεις και ὑποκρισεις. Cyprian, Ep. lxxvi. ad Magnum, [Ep. lxix. ed. Ox.] quotes one of these questions: "Credis remissionem peccatorum et vitam æternam per sanctam ecclesiam?"

[4] According to Tertullian, de C. M. c. iii. this happened twice—first, before he was fit for baptism, at his first introduction into the congregations, and then again at his baptism.

[5] Ἀποτασσεσθαι τῳ διαβολῳ και τῃ πομπῃ και τοις ἀγγελοις αὐτου.

effect that, which was denoted and represented as effective for the believer by the whole act of baptism. The case is slightly different with regard to the formula of renunciation, because this referred, like the confession of faith, to that which man must do *for his own part*, in order to become a partaker in the blessings of baptism. As faith and practice are so closely connected in Christianity, this renunciation followed immediately after the confession of faith. We find, therefore, in the second century, still no trace of any formula for banishing the evil spirit. But when the taste for magic, and the confusion between outward and inward, became more and more predominant, as men imagined an actual possession of the unbelievers by the evil spirit, and invented a proper magical formula for banishing him, and as men were always glad to increase the outward ceremonial in religious affairs, so it came to pass, that the formula of exorcism, which was used in the case of the energumens or possessed, was introduced into the baptism of all heathens. Perhaps also another circumstance was closely connected with this change, namely, that in general a mere lifeless mechanical act, attached to a particular office in the Church, had taken the place of the real exorcising, which in earlier times had been a free grace or charisma. In the apostolic constitutions we find neither the one nor the other. The first unequivocal trace of exorcism in baptism, is found in the acts of the council of Carthage, composed of eighty-seven or eighty-five bishops, A.D. 256[6].

As far as regards the *outward* form of baptism, this, as well as so much of Christianity beside, is deduced from Judaism, whether it be an imitation of the baptism of proselytes, since this already existed among the Jews, or whether it be taken from their common habit of outward purification. John the Baptist, in opposition to the "opus operatum" of the Jewish lustrations, brought forward his baptism, as a sign of preparation for the approaching appearance of the Messiah and his kingdom,—a sign of repentance, by which

[6] The North African bishop, Cæcilius of Bilta, here supposes, in delivering his sentence, that exorcism belongs essentially to the integrity of baptism. The sentence of the fanatical Vincentius, bishop of Thibari, was, that the "manuum impositio in exorcismo" must precede the baptism of a heretic. But from the lxxvith [lxix. ed. Ox.] epistle of Cyprian, addressed to Magnus, we cannot prove the existence of exorcism in baptism generally, because there the subject of discussion is exorcism of the energumens, and Cyprian is inclined to show that baptism is far more powerful than exorcism. "Spiritus nequam ultra remanere non possunt in hominis corpore, in quo *baptizato* et *sanctificato* incipit Spiritus sanctus habitare."

man was to make himself capable of reception into the kingdom of God. Christ also retained this existing form of baptism, as a symbol of consecration for the approaching kingdom of the Messiah, and he ennobled it by the new and higher spirit, which he imparted to it, to which John the Baptist had already pointed. Instead of a baptism into the hope of a Messiah, who was about to appear among the people and reveal himself to them, men were now to be baptized in the name of the Messiah, who had already appeared, and who was working by Divine power; instead of a negative kind of baptism to repentance, by way of preparation, the baptism of the Spirit was to make its appearance as the symbol of an inward renovation and elevation, by means of that communication of Divine life, which was to be shed upon this baptism from the Messiah, as the Redeemer of man estranged from God, and the founder of the kingdom of heaven among mankind, whom He had redeemed. As long as the fulness of the Divine nature was hidden under the guise of an earthly and human existence, this Divine efficacy of the Messiah did not reveal itself, the Divine life was then *his own* exclusive possession among men. As He himself declared, the seed must first fall into the earth and die in order to bring forth much *fruit*. It was only after He should have ascended into heaven, that the glorified Son of man would be able to bestow that baptism of the Spirit in its Divine and invisible efficacy. It was then that the true sense of the Christian baptism was fully expanded.

We certainly cannot prove, that when Christ commanded his disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, He intended to establish a particular formula of baptism. The purpose of expressing the true character of a consecration to the kingdom of God, and of declaring in a few words the nature of his Divine efficacy among the human race, and the nature of his new religion, was decidedly of more importance with Him, than that of giving a certain form of words, which should last for all ages. He wished to show the dependence of the whole life on the one God, who had revealed Himself through his Son as the Father of fallen man, and who imparts his Spirit to sanctify man, whom his Son has redeemed; as well as to point to the true worship of God, as He had revealed Himself through his Son, in a heart sanctified by the Divine life, which is shed forth from Him. The proper nature of the peculiar theism of Christianity (God in Christ and through Christ) is briefly set

forth in these words. On that very account, therefore, these words were also most eminently calculated to serve for a formula of baptism, inasmuch as the essential character and relations of the Christian consecration were so clearly set forth in them. We cannot, however, prove from the use of the expressions βαπτισμος εἰς ὀνομα του Χριστου, εἰς Χριστον, *baptism into the name of Christ, into Christ*, that in the apostolic age this shorter formula was commonly used instead of the fuller one. For in the passages, where this description of baptism is met with, no verbal formula of baptism is meant to be given at all, but only the characteristic aim of baptism is meant to be brought forward, the expression of a belief in Jesus, as the Messiah, and an engagement to live in faith and obedience to Him. It may be said, perhaps, that the revival of this simple formula of baptism by Marcion, is a proof that it was the original, and that the shorter one was of later date, for Marcion (see below, in the history of sects) was desirous in respect to every thing to separate that which was original and apostolic from the additions of the Church in later times. But this argument is not to be depended on, for Marcion may have drawn conclusions from the common expressions of St. Paul on baptism, without any other historical grounds, and have been induced, solely from these conclusions, to accuse the Church in this case, as well as in other things, of an adulteration of the original simplicity of the Gospel; and there may be reasons, why his own system of doctrine led him to favour the more simple formula. We should have better reason to conclude, from the respect which men showed in the Romish Church for this formula in the controversies which we are shortly about to mention, that much might be said for its antiquity. At all events, the fuller formula, when properly understood, was nothing more than the development of that which was implicitly contained in the shorter form. Justin Martyr quotes the former as that which was generally prevalent in his day.

Baptism was originally administered by immersion, and many of the comparisons of St. Paul allude to this form of its administration: the immersion is a symbol of death, of being buried with Christ, the coming forth from the water is a symbol of a resurrection with Christ, and both taken together represent the second birth, the death of the old man and a resurrection to a new life. An exception was made only in the case of sick persons, which was necessary, and they received baptism by sprinkling. Many

superstitious persons imagined, from attaching too much importance to externals, that baptism by sprinkling was not valid, and therefore they distinguished those who were so baptized from other Christians, by the name of "clinici[7]." Cyprian expresses himself strongly against this fancy[8]: "The breast of the believer is washed in one way, and the soul of man is purified by the merit of faith in another. In the sacraments of salvation, when necessity compels and God gives permission, the Divine service, though abridged, confers its whole efficacy on the believer[9]. . . . . Or if any one supposes that they have obtained nothing because they have only been sprinkled with the water of salvation, let them not be deceived so far as to be baptized again, if they recover their health. But if those, who have already been sanctified by the baptism of the Church, are not to be baptized again, why should their faith be troubled, and the grace of God made a reproach to them. Have they, then, obtained the grace of God, but obtained it with a shorter and a deficient measure of the gift of God and of the Holy Spirit, so that they may be reckoned as Christians, but not placed on the same footing with the rest? Nay, then, the Holy Spirit is not given by measure, but is shed on the believer in its whole fulness. For if the day dawns on all alike, and the sun sheds an equal light on all, how much more does Christ, the true sun and the true day, impart to all in his Church the light of eternal life with impartial equality."

As faith and baptism are constantly so closely connected together in the New Testament, an opinion was likely to arise, that where there could be no faith, there could also be no baptism. It is certain that Christ did not ordain infant baptism; he left indeed much, which was not needful for salvation, to the free development of the Christian spirit, without here appointing binding laws. We cannot prove that the apostles ordained infant baptism; from those places where the baptism of a whole family is mentioned, as in Acts xvi. 33; 1 Cor. i. 16. we can draw no such conclusion, because the inquiry is still to be made, whether there were any children in these families of such an age, that they were not capable of any intelligent reception of Christianity, for this is the only point on which the case turns. From the deficiency of his-

[7] See above, p. 257.

[8] Ep. lxxvi. ad Magn. [Ep. lxix. ed. Ox.]

[9] "Totum credentibus conferunt divina compendia." This passage has been slightly paraphrased in the translation to render it intelligible.

torical documents of the first half of this period, we must also avow that the want of any positive testimony to the custom cannot be brought as an argument against its antiquity. The first passage which appears expressly to point to this matter, is found in Irenæus. We shall consider the whole of this remarkable passage with some degree of accuracy. Irenæus is endeavouring to show, that Christ did not stop the progress of the development of human nature, which was to be sanctified by him, but that he sanctified it, in all its successive stages, in conformity to its essential qualities in each: "He came to redeem all by himself; all I say, who are born again into God through him, infants, children, boys, youths, and the old. Therefore he passed through every age, and became an infant to infants, sanctifying infants, he became a child among children, to sanctify those of this age, giving them at the same time an example of piety, of justice, and obedience, and for young men he became a young man, to set them an example, and to sanctify them to the Lord[1]." It is here of consequence to remark particularly, that infants (infantes) are expressly distinguished from children (parvuli), to whom Christ can serve as an example; and that these infants are represented as being only capable of receiving an objective salvation from Christ, who appeared in an age and condition similar to theirs. This salvation is imparted to them in consideration of their being born again in reference to God, through Christ. In Irenæus the new birth and baptism are intimately connected, and it would be difficult for one to imagine any thing else than baptism as meant by the new birth, when used in reference to this age. Infant baptism also here appears the means by which the principle imparted through Christ to human nature from its very earliest development, might be appropriated to the salvation of children. We find here the essentially Christian notion, from which infant baptism would derive itself spontaneously, the more Christianity penetrated into domestic life; namely, that Christ, by means of that Divine life, which He communicated to human nature, and revealed in it, has sanctified that nature from the very first seed

[1] Irenæus, II. c. xxii. § 4. "Omnes enim per semetipsum venit salvare: omnes, inquam, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, infantes et parvulos et pueros et juvenes et seniores. Ideo per omnem venit ætatem, et infantibus infans factus, sanctificans infantes, in parvulis parvulus, sanctificans hanc ipsam habentes ætatem, simul et exemplum illis pietatis effectus, et justitiæ et subjectionis, in juvenibus juvenis, exemplum juvenibus fiens et sanctificans Domino."

of its development. If every thing was as it ought to be, the child born in a Christian family would have this advantage, that he did not first come to Christianity from heathenism, or from a natural life of sin, but that he would grow up, from the first dawning of conscience, under the imperceptible and preventing[2] influence of a sanctifying and ennobling Christianity; with the very first seeds of consciousness in the natural life, a Divine principle, ennobling nature, would be near him, by which the diviner portion of his nature might be attracted and strengthened, before its ungodliness could come into full activity; and this latter evil spirit would here find itself overmatched by its counterpoise. In such a life the new birth would form no division, that began at any one particular moment, but it would begin imperceptibly, and so continue its progress through the whole life. Therefore the visible token of the new birth, that is, baptism, was to be given to the child from its earliest hours, and he was to be consecrated to his Saviour from the very first.

From this idea, founded on the internal feelings of Christianity, which obtained an influence over men's dispositions, the custom of infant baptism proceeded. Oh! that men had not so soon confused the Divine thing and the sign which represented it, and had not wished to bind the work of the Spirit on the outward sign!

But immediately after Irenæus[3], in the latter years of the second century, Tertullian appeared as a zealous opponent of infant baptism, a proof that it was not then usually considered as an apostolical ordinance, for in that case he would hardly have ventured to speak so strongly against it. We see from his arguments against infant baptism, that its defenders had already appealed to Matt. xix. 14. which it would be very obvious to any one to quote: "The Lord did not reject little children, they were to be brought to Him, that He might bless them." Tertullian advises generally, that men should delay baptism, in consideration

[2] [Zuvorkommenden. I have here used the word 'preventing' in its old sense, as used in our collects. H. J. R.]

[3] If any one were inclined to prove the existence of infant baptism from the passage of Clemens Alexand. Pædag. iii. 247. ἐξ ὑδατος ἀναστπωμενων παιδων, which we quoted above, and which certainly relates to baptism, we might remark that this is hardly to be considered any proof; for as the notion of the θειος παιδαγωγος was present to the imagination of Clement, he might call all Christians παιδια. But he is undoubtedly here speaking of conversion and regeneration, in reference to all mankind.

of the great importance of this rite and the preparation necessary for it on the part of the recipient, rather than hasten unprepared to it, and on this he takes occasion to declare himself particularly against haste in the baptism of children[4]. In regard to the saying of Christ which was quoted against him, he answers, "Let them come, while they are growing up; let them come, while they are learning, while they are being taught whither it is they come; let them become Christians, after they have had an opportunity of knowing Christ. Why does the age of innocence hasten to the forgiveness of sins? Men will act more prudently in secular affairs, if Divine things are entrusted to those, to whom worldly substance would not be entrusted. Let them first learn to seek salvation, that you may appear to give to one who asks it." Tertullian desires that children may be brought to Christ, while they are being instructed in Christianity; but he does not wish them to receive baptism until they have been sufficiently instructed in Christianity, and from their own conviction and free choice, with earnest longings of the heart, desire baptism themselves. One may perhaps say: he is only speaking of what ought to be done in ordinary cases according to rule; but if any sudden danger of death threatened, even on his own principles, baptism ought to take place. But then, had he thought this so necessary, he would hardly have omitted to state it expressly. It appears then from the grounds which he lays down, that he could not imagine any efficacy of baptism without the conscious participation of the person baptized, and his own individual faith; and he also saw no danger to the innocence of infancy (although, according to his own system, this is by no means a logical inference).

But whilst, on the one hand, the doctrine of the corruption and guilt, inherited by human nature, as the consequence of the first transgression, was reduced into a more systematic and distinct form, which was particularly the case in the North African Church (see below, in the history of the doctrines of Christianity); on the other hand, from want of a proper distinction between the external and internal things of baptism (the baptism of water, and the baptism of the Spirit), the idea was for ever gaining ground, and becoming more firmly fixed, that without outward baptism no one could be freed from that inherited guilt, saved from the eternal punishment which threatened him, or brought to

[4] De Baptismo, c. xviii. "Cunctatio baptismi utilior est, præcipuo circa parvulos."

eternal happiness; and while the idea of the magical effects of the sacrament was constantly obtaining more and more sway, the theory of the *unconditional necessity of infant baptism* developed itself from that idea. This was generally received in the North African Church, as early as the middle of the third century. But there was still a question, whether the child should be baptized immediately after his birth, or eight days after, as in the case of circumcision? The latter was the opinion of bishop Fidus, who proposed the enquiry to a council at Carthage. Cyprian answered him, A.D. 252, in the name of sixty-six bishops[5]. His answer shows us how full he was of that great Christian idea, which we have mentioned above, from which the custom of infant baptism proceeded—and in this respect he says much that bears the genuine stamp of Christianity—but we also observe at the same time how his confusion between outward and inward,—his materialism —prevented him from comprehending it with sufficient freedom and clearness, and led him to mingle much that was erroneous with the truth he brought forward. What he says against the arbitrary appointment of the time advocated by Fidus, is altogether just. Let us hear his own words: "None of us could agree to your opinion; but we all determined that the grace of God is not to be refused to any human being, as soon as he is born. For since the Lord says in his Gospel, 'The Son of man is not come to destroy the souls of men, but to save them' (Luke ix. 56.), we are to do all in our power that no soul should be destroyed. . . . . For as God accepts not persons, so neither does he ages; since he shows himself a father to all for the attainment of heavenly grace with well-poised equality. For with regard to what you say, that the child is not clean to the touch in the first days of his birth, and that any one of us would shrink from giving it a kiss, this ought to be no impediment to bestowing heavenly grace upon it, since it is written, 'To the pure all things are pure.' None, therefore, of us ought to shrink from that which God has thought fit to make. Though the child be but just born, yet there is no reason even then, that any one should shrink from kissing it, to bestow upon it the grace of God, and give it the salutation of peace," (the brotherly kiss as a sign of the communion of peace in the Lord, was given to newly baptized persons,) "for every one of us, from his religious feelings, ought to think

[5] Ep. lix. [Ep. lxiv. ed. Ox.]

upon the creative hands of God, fresh from their work, which in some sort we kiss in a human being just born, when we embrace what God has made. . . . . But if any thing could prevent man from the attainment of grace, it would rather be great offences, that would prevent those of riper age. But if the greatest sinners, and those who beforehand have sinned greatly against God, receive remission of their sins, after they come to believe, and no one prohibits them from receiving baptism and grace, how much rather ought the infant not to be forbidden, which being newly born, cannot have sinned, except in as far as being born of Adam according to the flesh, it has contracted the contagion of the old death from its earliest birth? It comes more easily to obtain remission of its sins, because the sins which are forgiven to it, are not its own, but those of another."

In the Alexandrian Church also, which, in regard to its whole theological and dogmatical character, was so essentially different from the North African, we find this notion of the necessity of infant baptism prevalent somewhat earlier. Origen, in whose system infant baptism stood very high [6], though not in the same point of view as in the North African Church, declares that it is an apostolic tradition [7],—a declaration which cannot, in that century, be considered of any great weight, because men were at that time so much inclined to deduce the ordinances, which they thought of great importance, from the apostles; and besides this, there were many partition walls between this age and the apostolic, which prevented a free insight into that age.

But although in *theory* the necessity of infant baptism was allowed, yet it was far from being generally prevalent in practice. And it was not always from pure motives, that men were induced to delay their baptism. The same false view of baptism, as an "opus operatum," which moved some to hold the unconditional necessity of infant baptism, induced others, who mistook the nature of baptism far more and in a far more dangerous manner, to delay their baptism for a longer period, in order that they

[6] With Origen it obtains a place in connexion with his doctrine that human souls are heavenly beings that have sinned, and that they must be purified from the guilt that they brought with them. See below.

[7] This he does expressly in the fifth book of his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, according to the Latin translation of Rufinus. Similar difficulties to those which were proposed by Tertullian, were also brought forward in the time of Origen. Compare his Homil. xiv. in Lucam. (In the translation of Jerome.)

might give themselves up to their vices, and, notwithstanding, in the hour of death, being purified by the magical annihilation of their sins, might be received into eternal life. We observed above, with what pious indignation, and with what force, the same Tertullian, who in other respects opposed haste in baptism, combated this fancy.

It was probably, also, infant baptism which *first* gave rise to the appointment of *baptismal-witnesses or godfathers;* for as the persons to be baptized in this case could not of themselves declare their confession of faith, nor make the necessary renunciation, others were to do it for them, and these engaged to take care that the children should be duly instructed in Christianity, and should be brought up to a life corresponding to the profession made at their baptism, and hence they were called *sponsors* (sponsores). Tertullian brings it as an argument against infant baptism, that these sponsors must undertake an engagement, which they may be prevented from fulfilling, perhaps by their own death, or by the evil conduct of the child[8].

The *symbolical customs*, connected with the simple rite of baptism, were afterwards gradually multiplied, at first hardly with any intention of increasing the holiness and significance of the thing by outward pomp, but because men felt themselves impelled from within, to express ideas and feelings, of which the heart was full, in a manner perceptible to the senses. Only it was a pity that men soon did not know how to distinguish these human ornaments from the substance of the Divine ordinance itself, to which they were attached, and that by the multiplication of outward things they were constantly induced to give them a greater share of importance.

From the essentially Christian idea of the *spiritual priesthood* of all Christians, another custom was derived, which was, that just as anointing, in the Old Testament, was the sign of the priestly consecration, so also the newly-baptized person should be consecrated to this *spiritual priesthood* by being anointed with oil, expressly blessed for that purpose. We find this custom first mentioned in Tertullian, and with Cyprian it appears a necessary part of the rite of baptism[9]. The *laying on of hands*,

[8] Tertullian, de Baptismo, c. xviii. "Quid enim necesse est, sponsores etiam periculo ingeri? quia et ipsi per mortalitatem destituere promissiones suas possunt et proventu malæ indolis falli."

[9] Tertullian, de Baptismo, c. vii. "Egressi de lavacro perunguimur benedicta

accompanied by prayer, with which the ceremony of baptism was concluded, is undoubtedly older than this custom. The imposition of hands (ἐπιθεσις των χειρων, χειροθεσια, סְמִיכָה) was the usual sign of religious consecration, borrowed from the Jews, which was used in different cases as the sign of consecration, as well to the common calling of a Christian in general as to its particular branches. When the apostles or the pastors of the Church laid their hands on the head of the baptized person, they called upon the Lord to bestow his blessing on the rite they had now completed, and prayed that he would suffer all which this rite typified to be fulfilled in the person now baptized, that he would consecrate him with his Spirit for his Christian profession, and shed his Spirit upon him. This was the *closing* rite, inseparably united with the old act of baptism; all here had reference to the same principal matter, without which no man can be a Christian—the birth into a new life proceeding from God, the baptism of the Spirit, which was symbolically represented by the baptism of water. But in after times, men were led, by a misunderstanding, to separate these two things from one another in an erroneous manner.

In the *apostolic* age, when the Divine life first entered into human nature in its rough state, which was gradually to be ennobled by it, it manifested itself, as soon as it found entrance, by many striking appearances. There were the marks of the powerful energies it produced, which ceased afterwards, when the foundations of the Church being once laid, her progress was made more quietly, but which, in those first times, served to call the

unctione de pristina disciplina qua ungui oleo de cornu in sacerdotium solebant." Adv. Marcion. c. xiv. de Res. Carn. c. viii. But in his book de Corona Militis, c. iii. where he mentions the customs belonging to baptism which are taken from the tradition of the Church, and not from Scripture, he does not name the anointing. Cyprian, Ep. lxx. in the name of a synod: "Ungi quoque necesse est eum, qui baptizatus sit, ut accepto chrismate esse unctus Dei et habere in se gratiam Christi possit," (the following words about the Lord's Supper, are clearly a gloss, which destroys the sense of the passage, and which took its rise from the after mention of the Lord's Supper,) "unde baptizati unguntur *oleo in altari sanctificato**."

* [To make the passage in a parenthesis intelligible, in must be observed, that in many editions of Cyprian, there is a full stop after "possit," and the next sentence is read thus: "*Porro autem Eucharistia est* unde baptizati unguntur, oleum in altari sanctificatum." I have put the words which Dr. Neander condemns in italics. —H. J. R.]

attention of the carnal man to Christianity. The indications of an extraordinary inspiration, which had accompanied the first baptism of the Spirit, conferred on the first Church on the day of Pentecost, were repeated also at the baptism of individuals. It therefore happened, when baptism was conferred on individuals, and the blessing bestowed on them at the last ceremony of laying on of hands, that the Lord was called upon in prayer, to make this baptism constantly efficacious in them, and active; such actual proofs of its efficacy followed in the case mentioned in Acts xix. 6. When St. Peter and St. John came to Samaria, in order to inquire more particularly into the effects of the Gospel which had been preached by Philip, they observed that these tokens of the baptism of the Spirit, which were then usual, had not been manifested at all in those who had hitherto been baptized there. (Acts viii.) The passage does not speak of the baptism of the Spirit in general, but only of these *outward marks* of it, and this single case can therefore be applicable to *those times* only. The apostles only prayed (for the abridged account which is here given must be supplied from other similar cases), while they consecrated the baptized in their usual manner, that these effects of the baptism of the Spirit might follow here also—and it was so. In the first case, with regard to St. Paul, (Acts xix. 5, 6) baptism and laying on of hands were clearly *one whole;* in the second case (Acts viii.) where, nevertheless, Philip appears to have given the laying on of hands and baptism at the same time, there were peculiar circumstances which had reference only to *this* particular time. But still, from a wrong view of these cases, a notion was formed as early as the end of the second century, that the communication of the Holy Ghost was entirely dependent on this sign of imposition of hands. Tertullian, therefore, considered water baptism as the preparatory purification, which was to pave the way for the communication of the Holy Ghost to the person so purified, by the imposition of hands [1]; but yet, in Tertullian, the baptism and the consecration which follows it, appear connected together as one *whole.*

[1] Tertull. de Baptismo, c. viii. "Dehinc manus imponitur per benedictionem advocans et invitans Spiritum sanctum." In his treatise de Res. Carn. c. viii., he names all those three things together with baptism, which afterwards were separated from it, and being united together into one whole, formed the sacrament of confirmation in the Romish Church: that is to say, the anointing as the consecration of the soul, the making the sign of the cross as a preservative against evil, and the laying on of hands as bringing with it the "illuminatio Spiritus."

But when once[2] the notion of the exclusively spiritual character of the bishops had been formed, and it was supposed that they, as the successors of the apostles, had alone received all spiritual perfection by the magical consecration of ordination, as well as the right of conferring the Holy Ghost by means of their magical priestly functions, men ascribed also to the bishops alone the power of producing a real baptism of the Spirit. The unfounded view from which this notion proceeded was the following: Philip was unable to confer a true baptism of the Spirit, because he was only a deacon; the apostles *supplied* what was here wanting, by means of the seal of baptism (signaculum), the laying on of hands. So therefore presbyters, nay even deacons also, in cases of necessity, were entitled to baptize; but the bishop alone could complete the second part of the holy rite. This idea was fully formed as early as the middle of the third century. The bishops were therefore obliged at times to travel through their dioceses, in order to administer what was afterwards called *confirmation*, to those who had been baptized by the parish priests, the clergy in the country. In common cases, where the bishop himself administered the rite of baptism himself, these two were nevertheless joined together, and together they made up *the complete rite of baptism*[3].

The newly-baptized person in many Churches (in the North African and the Alexandrian) received a mixture of milk and honey, as a symbol of his childhood in a new life, which was the spiritual interpretation of the promise about a land which flowed with milk and honey—a promise which referred to the heavenly country, to which the baptized belonged, with all its heavenly

[2] See above.

[3] Cyprian speaks of a "sacramentum duplex," the baptism by water, and the baptism of the Spirit represented by the laying on of hands, "sacramento utroque nasci," and yet also of both as united in the Church rite of baptism. Ep. lxxiii. ad Jubajanum, and Ep. lxxii. ad Stephanum. We must here certainly recur to the fluctuating use of the word "sacramentum," by which all holy things, all holy doctrines, and all holy signs were denoted. After introducing the example of Philip and the apostles, he says: "Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, ut qui in ecclesia baptizantur, præpositis ecclesiæ offerantur, et per nostram orationem ac manus impositionem Spiritum Sanctum consequantur et signaculo dominico consummentur." The same representation occurs in the book de Rebaptismate, which was most probably a contemporary work. This rite is there called "baptisma spiritale." Cornelius, (cap. Euseb. vi. 33.) in regard to a person who had not been able to receive this confirmation from the bishop, makes the following inquiry: "How could he without *this* become a partaker in the Holy Spirit?"

advantages[4]. He was then received into the Church with the first kiss of Christian brotherhood, the salutation of peace, of peace with God, which he now shared with all Christians; and from this time he had the right of saluting all Christians with this token of brotherhood[5].

Before, however, we leave this subject, we have a controversy to mention, which created a great sensation in the latter half of the third century. The question was, "What is necessary to the validity of a baptism? What is to be done in regard to a heretic, who comes to the orthodox Church, after he has received baptism in his own sect?" Before any particular inquiries had been set on foot with regard to this point, men acted in different countries in different ways, because, as it commonly happens, they involuntarily set out from different principles. In Asia Minor and the neighbouring regions, the light in which it was regarded was this, that only such baptism as had been administered in the orthodox Church, in which alone all religious rites could be duly administered, was valid, that the baptism of heretics was to be looked upon as of no value, and therefore that the true baptism must be administered to one who came over from one of the sects, just as to a heathen. This is very easily to be explained from the violence of the controversial relations which existed between the Church and the sects, just in these very regions, as well as from the nature of these sects, as for instance of the Gnostic, which had departed from the commonly prevailing principles on the most essential points of doctrine and rites. In the Romish Church, on the contrary, where on other occasions the most bitter controversial spirit existed against heretics, men followed the dictates of a milder spirit in this question, because here they looked on the objective part of baptism as of most importance; they practically set out from the principle, that baptism, by virtue of the objective sign of the name of Christ or of the Trinity, which was invoked in its celebration, was always valid, *by whomsoever* and *under whatsoever* religious notions it was administered. Therefore the Church recognised heretics,

[4] See the above-quoted passage from Tertullian, de Cor. Mil. and Adv. Marcion. i. 14. "Deus mellis et lactis societate suos infantat;" *i. e.* he recognises them as his new-born children. Clemens, Pæd. i. p. 103. *εὐθυς ἀναγεννηθεντες τετιμημεθα της ἀναπαυσεως την ἐλπιδα, την ἀνω Ἱερουσαλημ εὐαγγελιζομενοι, ἐν ᾗ μελι και γαλα ὁμβρειν ἀναγεγραπται.*

[5] "Osculum pacis," *εἰρηνη*. See above.

who came over to her, as baptized Christians; and in order that the Holy Spirit might make the baptism which they had received efficacious, the bishop administered confirmation to them under the idea which we have before explained (and we may observe that this was one of the inducements to separate baptism and confirmation). As Churches were inclined to form themselves on the model of their metropolitan Church (the sedes apostolicæ,) most of the western Churches probably followed the example of that of Rome.

But in the latter years of the second century, this custom, which had hitherto been observed in silence, became the subject of a particular investigation in Asia Minor; whether it was, that the Montanistic Churches, following the principle which prevailed even there also, those who were glad of any handle to oppose the Montanists, were induced to make this a subject of controversy, or whether it was from some other cause. The ruling party declared itself for abiding by the old principle. Afterwards, when this matter was again the subject of deliberation, this principle was solemnly confirmed in two synods, assembled at Iconium and Synnada in Phrygia. This also introduced the point as a subject of controversy in other regions. Tertullian, most probably while he was still a member of the Catholic Church, wrote a separate treatise in Greek upon the subject, in which he did not hesitate to dissent from the Romish Church on this point. It was natural that he should write on this occasion in Greek, because, in the countries were this controversy was on foot, Greek was the only language understood. In order to prove the validity of heretical baptism, the opposite party had already appealed to Ephes. iv. 5, 6, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father;" and they drew from it the following conclusion: Wherever we find that men call upon the one God and the one Lord, there we must recognise the validity of their baptism. Tertullian, however, says in reply[6], "This can only relate to us, who know and call upon the true God and Christ; the heretics have not this God and this Christ; and these words, therefore, cannot be applied to them: and since they cannot duly administer baptism, it is all one as if they had no baptism at all."

In the North African Church, men were generally inclined to

[6] De Baptismo, c. xv.

follow the example of the mother Church at Rome; but they were far from meaning to submit their own judgment to the authority of that Church[7]. Seventy North African bishops, in a council held at Carthage, under the presidency of bishop Agrippinus, declared themselves for the opposite opinion. Still, no party wished to force its views and practice on the others; the Churches which differed on this subject, did not think of breaking the bond of brotherly harmony, on account of a difference that was of such small importance in regard to the essentials of Christianity. But here again it was a *Romish* bishop, namely, Stephanus, who, moved by the spirit of hierarchical ambition and blind zeal, attributed so much importance to this controversy. He excommunicated the bishops of Asia Minor, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Cilicia, about the end of the year 253, and gave them the name of *Re-baptizers*, *Anabaptists*, (Ἀναβαπτισται)[8]; a name which, according to *their* principles, they did not deserve —for they did not wish to administer a *second* baptism to those who had been already baptized, but they did not acknowledge the previous baptism by the heretics as a *proper* baptism.

From Asia, the discussions relative to this matter extended themselves into North Africa. Here a party had always remained devoted to the old Romish custom; the earlier discussions had been forgotten, and, therefore, new inquiries and investigations were commenced on the subject. These induced Cyprian, the bishop, to propose the matter to two synods held at Carthage, the one of eighteen, and the other of seventy-six bishops, A.D. 255, and both these assemblies declared themselves in favour of Cyprian's opinion, that "the baptism of heretics was *not* to be acknowledged as valid." As he was well aware how great weight the Romish Church and her adherents attached to the antiquity of customs, and that they gave out these observances, which were of long standing, as apostolical traditions, although cases like these, from their very nature, could scarcely have arisen in the time of the apostles; he expressed himself in the following manner in a letter to Quintus, an African bishop, to whom he communicated the resolution of the council[9]. "But we are not to be governed by custom, but overcome by reasoning. For neither did Peter, whom the Lord chose the first, and

[7] See above.

[8] Dionys. ap. Euseb. vii. 6. Firmilian. ap. Cyprian. Ep. lxxv.

[9] Ep. lxxi.

on whom He built his Church, insolently and arrogantly, when Paul and He were afterwards at variance about circumcision, (Gal. ii.)[1] take upon himself to say, that he held the primacy, and that the younger and newer apostle must obey him; nor did he despise Paul, because he had formerly been a persecutor of the Church, but he received the counsel of truth, and easily acceded to the just reasons which Paul urged: he gave us, therefore, an example of unity and patience, that we might not be too much enamoured of our own way, but rather make that our own way, which is suggested to us at times, with profit and advantage, by our colleagues, if it be true and lawful." A truth, indeed, which it is much more easy to acknowledge and express than to act upon, as the history of the Church, alas! and even the example of Cyprian himself, give us to learn. He made known the resolutions of the greater council to Stephanus, the bishop of Rome, in a letter which, while it breathes the spirit of freedom, is written with delicacy[2]; but Stephanus, in an answer written in a haughty tone[3], opposed Cyprian by the authority of the tradition of the Romish Church. He went so far in his unchristian blind zeal, as to indulge in unworthy abuse against his African colleagues, the bishops, who came to him as deputies from the North African Church; he would not hold a conversation with them; nay, he forbade his Church to receive them in their houses. Still, Cyprian was far from thinking of making his reason submit to the authority of the Romish Church. He called together a still more numerous council, consisting of eighty-seven bishops at Carthage, and this assembly also abided by the principles which had been before expressed. The votes and sentiments of many of these bishops show a narrow-hearted and fanatical hatred of heretics, and a pharisaical idea of the holiness of the Church. (A sort of prelude this to those struggles and convulsions, which were produced in the North-African Church, by means of the human passions that mingled themselves with spiritual matters.) And so it happened, partly on both sides, as is generally the case among men blinded by passion, that while they were striving about the sign, they lost sight of the thing itself; while they were quarrelling with one another about what was required to make the outward *sign* of the birth of the

[1] It is worth while to observe how the unprejudiced and free-spirited view of this event had constantly been maintained in the North African Church.

[2] Ep. lxxii. [3] See above.

Spirit valid, they destroyed the nature of that birth of the Spirit! Cyprian now endeavoured to form a connexion between himself and the Asiatic bishops, who thought with him, and he therefore communicated the whole case to one of the most honoured of the Asiatic bishops, Firmilianus, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia. Firmilianus signified to Cyprian his entire concurrence in his views[4], and at the same time spoke excellently on the advantages of general deliberations on spiritual things, when the Spirit of Christ animated them. "Since the Divine doctrine surpasses the limits of human nature, and the soul of man cannot embrace it in its whole compass and perfection, therefore the number of the prophets is so great, in order that Divine wisdom, being multifarious, may be divided among many. Therefore, he that has spoken first as a prophet, is commanded to keep silence if any thing is revealed to a second person." (1 Cor. xiv. 30.)

Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, whose Christian moderation we observed during a former controversy[5], distinguished himself also in this by the same quality. He agreed on this point with the Churches of North Africa and Asia Minor in their *principles*, which had also been for a long time those of the Alexandrian Church[6]; but then, it was with this difference, that *this free-hearted man was more inclined to make exceptions* from the rule in the case of certain sects, whose doctrines were altogether in harmony with the Church[7]. But still, he endeavoured to maintain brotherly harmony with the Romish bishops, and to make them disposed for peace. He begged the Romish bishop Stephanus, with most touching representations, not to disturb the Oriental Church again in the enjoyment of that external peace, which she

[4] Ep. lxxv. [5] See above.

[6] That the Alexandrian Church also rejected the baptism administered in the churches of heretics, is clearly deducible from the declaration of Dionysius, in his letter to Sixtus II. bishop of Rome, (Euseb. vii. 7.) when he says, that the members of the Catholic Church, who had gone over to the heretics, when they returned again to the Church, were not rebaptized, for they had received the holy baptism already from the bishop; but then, it was *only in this case*. They did not with this acknowledge the baptism administered *out of the Catholic Church* as a holy and valid one. That in the time of Clement the baptism of heretics was considered invalid in the Alexandrian Church, appears to follow from Strom. i. p. 317, D. where he explains Prov. ix. 8. (in the Alexandrian version) allegorically, thus:—*το βαπτισμα το αἱρετικον οὐκ οἰκειον και γνησιον ὑδωρ λογιζομενη.*

[7] Thus he made such an exception in favour of the baptism administered in Montanistic Churches, probably because he thought more mildly than others on the relation of these to the general Church.

had received through the emperor Valerian, and of the inward peace which had accompanied it (after the schism of Novatian had been got under). He writes thus to him: "Know, my brother! that all the Churches in the East, and even further also, which were formerly divided, are now united, and all their prelates every where are in harmonious agreement, rejoicing beyond measure at the peace which has been accorded to them against their expectation, ... and thanking God in unity and brotherly love." It was apparently in consequence of his dealing with the Romish Church in this spirit of love and judicious delicacy, that Stephanus did not venture to excommunicate him also with the rest. He continued his correspondence with Sixtus, the successor of Stephanus. Indeed, he himself asks the advice of Sixtus, in a matter where they could set out from the same principles, in order to maintain the bond of brotherly love[8]. These controversies were shortly after silenced by reason of the struggle which the Church had to go through during the persecution of Valerianus; and probably also the successors of Stephanus did not partake in his blind zeal[9].

We have now, in conclusion, to consider more accurately the points in controversy between these two parties, and the manner in which they developed themselves on both sides. There were two controverted points; the first of them was this: the Romish party held that the validity of baptism depended on its having been administered as Christ had commanded. It was, according to this view, the *formula of baptism* which gave it all its objective validity; the subjective condition of the baptizing priest, who was merely an instrument, and the place where it was administered, had nothing to do with its validity. That which is objectively Divine, they would say, can preserve its own power; the grace of God may work objectively in this mode, if it only find, in the baptized person, a soul capable of this grace; and he may receive the grace of baptism by *his faith and feelings*, wheresoever he may happen to be baptized[10]. Cyprian reproaches his

[8] Euseb. vii. 5. [9] Euseb. vii. 9.

[10] "Eum, qui quomodocunque foris (out of the Church) baptizatur, mente et fide sua baptismi gratiam consequi." We must not understand the meaning of the Romish Church to be, that the use of the proper formula of baptism, even in cases where that baptism was, in all other respects, unlike the original institution, would confer validity upon it. It was presumed on both sides, that the matter under discussion related to a baptism, which was duly administered in other respects. If the opponents of Stephanus and his party could have charged them with any thing

adversaries here with an inconsistency, against which they could not well defend themselves,—it was this: if the baptism of the heretical Churches had an objective validity, their confirmation must equally have an objective validity also. "For," says Cyprian, "if any man born (that is to say, in the new birth) out of the pale of the Church, can become a temple of God, why should not the Holy Spirit also be shed upon this temple? He who is sanctified by having laid aside his sins by baptism, and is become a new man after the Spirit, is made capable of receiving the Holy Spirit; for the apostle says: 'As many of you as are baptized in Christ have put on Christ;' and he, therefore, who can put on Christ by being baptized among the heretics, can surely far more receive the Holy Spirit; . . . . . as if Christ could be put on without the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit be separated from Christ[1]!"

The other party maintained, on the contrary, that only the baptism, which is performed within the true Church, as that in which alone the Holy Spirit is effective, can be valid. If this were understood only of being outwardly in the Church, and of belonging to it outwardly, the decision would here be easy enough. But Cyprian here meant really an inward subjective union with the true Church through faith and feelings, and he presupposes the baptizing priest himself, in virtue of his faith, to be an instrument of the Holy Ghost, in order to properly complete the sacramental acts by the magical power of his priesthood; as for instance, to be able to communicate a supernatural power to the water[2]. When, therefore, the matter was *so stated, and thus made to depend on the subjective condition of the priest;* then it would be *difficult* in many cases to decide on the validity of a baptism, and many scruples might arise on the subject, for who could look into the inward heart of the priest[3].

on this account, they would hardly have failed to do so. Dionysius of Alexandria, in the inquiry which he makes of the Romish bishop, (Euseb. vii. 9.) supposes also that they were agreed on this point.

[1] Cyprian, Ep. lxxiv.

[2] Cyprian, Ep. lxx. "Quomodo sanctificare aquam potest, qui ipse immundus est et apud quem Spiritus Sanctus non est? Sed et pro baptizato quam precem facere potest sacerdos sacrilegus et peccator?"

Ep. lxxvi. (Ep. lxix. ed. Ox.) "Quando hæc in ecclesia fiunt, ubi sit et accipientis et dantis fides integra."

[3] The author of the treatise de Rebaptismate, which is found in Cyprian's works, might hence make the objection: "Quid dicturus es de his, qui plerumque ab

But the Romish party went still further in their maintenance of the objective importance of the formula of baptism; it even declared that baptism which was administered *in the name of Christ only*, without the use of the fuller formula, was objectively valid [4]. Cyprian, on the contrary, maintained that the formula was of no value, unless it was the full formula appointed by Christ. We perceive here the freer spirit of the anti-Cyprian party; the idea was before their eyes, that in the belief in Christ every thing which really belongs to Christianity was properly contained [5].

Cyprian himself would not venture to bind the grace of God on such outward things in regard to the cases, where converted heretics had once been received without a new baptism, and had enjoyed Church communion, or died in it. "God is powerful,"

episcopis pessimæ conversationis baptizantur?" in reference to such (bishops, &c.) as had been deprived after their vices were discovered. "Aut quid statues de eis, qui ab episcopis prave sentientibus aut imperitioribus fuerint baptizati?"

[4] It is undeniably clear that this was held by the Romish party, from the letters of Cyprian, and the treatise de Rebaptismate. If Firmilianus, (Ep. lxxv. ap. Cyprian,) speaks only of the formula in the name of the Trinity, it is however by no means clear that his *adversaries* also spoke only *of this*. Firmilianus brings forward only the point, against which in particular he wished to direct his arguments, namely, the principle that the formula gave an objective validity to the baptism, and therefore he does not distinguish what ought to have been distinguished in representing the opinion of his adversaries. And yet one catches a glimpse of the other proposition maintained by his opponents, when he says: "*Non omnes autem, qui nomen Christi invocant, audiri*," &c. The book de Rebaptismate, which does not want acuteness, I think I may certainly cite as a contemporary writing; I cannot suppose (after Gennadius, de Script. Eccles.) that it was written in the fourth century or later, by a monk named Ursinus. The author speaks like a man who lived in the midst of these controversies, and in the time of the persecutions, which one cannot expect to find in a later writer. When he says that these controversies will produce no other fruit, "nisi ut unus homo, quicunque ille est, magnæ prudentiæ et constantiæ esse apud quosdam leves homines inani gloria prædicetur;" we see easily that he means Cyprian, and none but a contemporary could have spoken of him in this way. The expression, however, "post tot seculorum tantam seriem" in regard to an old apostolic tradition, appears unsuitable in the mouth of a man who lived about the middle of the third century. But this expression would still remain very hyperbolical, even if we suppose it used by a writer at the end of the fourth century, and in general strong hyperbole is not uncommon among the African ecclesiastical writers.

[5] In the book de Rebaptismate: "Invocatio hæc nominis Jesu quasi initium mysterii dominici, commune nobis et cæteris omnibus, quod possit post modum residuis rebus impleri." The party of Stephanus did not do badly to appeal to the joy which St. Paul expresses, on finding that only Christ had been preached, although not exactly in the proper manner, as was the case with those Judaizing Christians. Philip. i. 16. Cyprian, who wishes to prevent them from making use of this passage, does not understand it so well himself. Ep. lxxiii.

he says, "to make allowances according to his mercy, and not to exclude those who, having been received into the Church without further ceremonies, have fallen asleep in it[6]." Dionysius of Alexandria[7] relates a remarkable case, which touches on these points: There was a converted heretic in the Alexandrian Church, who for many years had lived as a member of the Church, and had taken part in the worship of God in the Church. Having attended the baptism of some of the catechumens, he remembered that what he had received for baptism in the sect (probably a Gnostic sect) from which he had been converted, was entirely unlike that which he then witnessed. Had he known that he, who has Christ in faith, has every thing which is needful for his advantage and his salvation, this would not have given him so much uneasiness. But as this was not clear to him, he doubted whether he could look upon himself as a real Christian, and he fell into a state of great anxiety and disquietude, because he thought that he was without true baptism, and without the grace of baptism. He fell down at the feet of the bishop in tears, and prayed him to give him baptism. The bishop sought to tranquillize him, and told him that he could not now first be baptized afresh, after he had so long been a partaker in the body and blood of our Lord. He told him that his having lived so long in the communion of the Church ought to satisfy him, and that he should come with a stedfast faith and a good conscience to the holy Supper of the Lord. But the wretched man was unable to overcome his scruples and his unhappiness. Here was an instance of the unhappy effects of holding too fast by outward things, and of the mischief which arises when men know not how to raise themselves with proper freedom to the things of the Spirit, which the inward man embraces through faith.

We now proceed to the second holy sign, which Christ ordained for his Church, the Supper of the Lord.

We here again look back to the first institution of this holy festival, without which its history in the first Church cannot be understood. The last meal which Christ partook of with his disciples on earth would naturally be full of the deepest importance, as the parting meal *of him* who was on the point of giving his life for *their salvation, and for that of all mankind*, and who,

[6] Ep. lxx. [I am unable to find this passage, and I therefore suppose the reference is erroneous.—H. J. R.]

[7] Euseb. vii. 10.

although no longer *visible* among them, as at this meal, yet as truly, and with more powerful Divine influence and richer blessings, was about to prove his invisible presence among them, and bestow upon them himself and all his heavenly treasures. The meal which he chose for this purpose was a *Passover*, the *fundamental covenant feast of the whole Mosaic religion*, which, in conformity with the development of the theocratic economy, was now to exchange its earthly character for a heavenly one, and to stand in a similar relation to the new form of religion. The Jewish Passover was a feast of thanksgiving for the Church, which the Almighty Creator, the God who permits the productions of nature to grow for the advantage of man, had bestowed on the people, whom he honoured with his *especial guidance*, when he saved them from the bondage of Egypt. The master of the house, who kept the Passover with his family, and distributed bread and wine among the guests, thanked God, who had given these fruits of the earth to man, for the favour which he had bestowed upon *his* people. Hence the cup of wine, over which this praise of God was pronounced, was called the cup of praise or thanksgiving[8]. Christ, as the master of the house, here spoke the *blessing;* but this blessing was now to receive a new application in reference to the theocracy; it was to relate to the deliverance from guilt and from the punishment of sin; to deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the gift of true moral freedom by the sacrifice of Christ for men; and to a preparation for the entrance into a heavenly country,—and this was the foundation of the kingdom of heaven, which was laid in the forgiveness of sins and deliverance from sin for all humanity. Hence Christ said, while he gave bread and wine to his disciples, that this bread and this wine *were to be to them*—and hence to all the faithful in all ages—his body and blood; that body which he was offering up for the forgiveness of their sins, for their salvation, and for the establishment of a theocracy under new relations; and as this outward sign represented to them his body and his blood, so truly would he be present among them hereafter in a spiritual manner, as truly as he was now visibly present among them; and just as they now corporeally enjoyed this bodily sustenance, so should they receive him, being present by his Divine efficacy, wholly within them to the nourishment of

[8] כּוֹס הַבְּרָכָה ποτηριον εὐλογιας = εὐχαριστιας. [The cup of blessing.]

their souls, they should spiritually eat his flesh and drink his blood (see John vi.), they should make his flesh and blood their own, and they should constantly suffer their nature to be more and more imbued with the Divine principle of life, which they would receive from communion with him. Thus they were to keep this feast together, to glorify the effects of his suffering for the advantage of human nature, and to celebrate their inward lively communion with him, and therefore with one another also, as members of one body under one head; they were to keep this feast until, in actual possession of their heavenly country, they should really enjoy in all its full compass the blessedness which his sufferings obtained for them, and without again fearing any separation from him, they should be united with him in his kingdom, even with intuitive reality and certainty.

After the model of the Jewish Passover, and the first institution of this rite, the celebration of the Lord's Supper originally was always joined with *a general meal*, and both together formed *one whole;* and because the communion of believers with the Lord, and their brotherly communion with each other, was represented by it, the two together were called the Supper of the Lord, (δειπνον του κυριου, or δειπνον κυριακον), or the love-feast, (ἀγαπη). It was the daily rite of Christian communion in the first Church at Jerusalem; in Acts ii. 46, we are most probably to understand both together under the phrase, κλᾳν ἀρτον. We find both connected together in the first Corinthian Church, and one is inclined to suppose that this was also the innocent simple meal of the Christians, of which Pliny speaks in his report to the emperor Trajan. (See above, Part I.) On the contrary, in the picture given by Justin Martyr, we find the Lord's Supper entirely separated from those meals of brotherly love, if, in fact, any such existed at all in the Churches which he had in his eye. The separation arose partly from such irregularities as those which took place in the Corinthian Church, when the spirit suitable to the following sacred rite had not prevailed in the previous meal, and partly from local circumstances, which prevented generally the institution of such meals in common. In fact, these meals peculiarly attracted the jealousy of the heathen, and gave occasion to the wildest and most abominable reports[9]; and this might early

[9] In speaking of the impediments a Christian wife would find in her marriage with a heathen, Tertullian says, (ad Uxor. ii. 4.) "Quis ad convivium illud dominicum, quod infamant, sine sua suspicione dimittet?"

cause their abolition, or, at least, their less frequent celebration.

We now speak first of these meals of brotherly love, as they were afterwards called (ἀγαπαι), when separated from the Supper of the Lord. Here all differences of earthly condition and rank were to disappear in Christ; all were here to be one in the Lord; rich and poor, high and low, masters and servants, were all to eat at the same table with one another. Tertullian paints the celebration of such a feast in the following manner[1]: "Our supper shews its nature by its name; it is called *agape*, which in Greek means *love*. Whatsoever it may cost, it is a gain to be put to cost in the cause of piety, since we delight all the poor by that refreshment. . . . . As the cause of the supper is honourable, judge ye with what regard to religion all besides is conducted in it; it admits of no vulgarity, it admits of no indecency; we do not lie down to table before a prayer has been offered to God; we eat only that which hunger requires, we drink only what it becomes men of sobriety and modesty to drink; we do not forget, while we are satisfying our wants, that God is to be adored by us through the night. The conversation is that of men, who know that God hears them. (After the meal is over.) After we have washed our hands, and the lights have been brought, each person is required to sing something to the praise of God for the instruction of all, just as he may be able from Scripture or from his own resources; and this shews what a man has drunk. The feast is concluded with prayer." These Agapæ gradually lost their true original meaning, which could only be maintained in the simple habits of the very earliest Churches; and they often became nothing but a dead form, which was no longer animated by the spirit of that brotherly love, which removes all distinctions between man and man, and unites all hearts together. Many abuses crept into them, which gave an opportunity to the evilminded to represent the whole festival in a hateful light. As it usually happens in cases of this kind, some attributed too much importance to the mere form, as an "opus operatum," and others unjustly condemned the whole thing, without distinguishing between the proper use and the abuse; and the error of both parties arose from their no longer understanding the simple child-like spirit from which this rite had

[1] Apologeticus, c. xxxix.

derived its origin. Certain rich members of the community gave these Agapæ, and fancied that they had done something particularly meritorious; here, where all should be on equal terms, a distinction of ranks was made, and the clergy [2], who ought to set an example of humility to all, allowed themselves to be particularly distinguished by the undue exercise of an outward preference to their order [3]. An unkindly, gloomy, ascetic spirit wholly condemned the Agapæ, and eagerly caught at all the abuses which ever attended their celebration in any place whatever, in order to paint them in exaggerated colours, and so to render the whole thing odious; and this was the case with Tertullian in his Montanism [4]. Clement of Alexandria speaks more temperately on the subject [5], although he declares himself against those, who thought that they could buy the promises of God by giving feasts, and who appeared to lower the name of heavenly love by limiting it to these agapæ. He says:—"Love is really a heavenly sustenance. . . . . In heaven is this heavenly feast; but though the earthly feast arises from love, yet it is not love itself, but only the proof of a benevolence, which is ready to impart and communicate. Take care, therefore, that your treasure be not ill-spoken of, for the kingdom of God consists not in meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. He that partakes of this meal will obtain the best of all things, the kingdom of heaven, while he strives even here below to belong to the holy assembly of love,

[2] ["Die Geistlichen." German.—I have some difficulty in translating this word, in consequence of Dr. Neander's notions on the subject of the priesthood. In using the words "the clergy," I give the notion of a body of clergy, at a time when perhaps he would hardly allow of any thing of the sort. I suppose he means the presbyters and deacons; but if so, it would seem that they became a distinct body rather early.—H. J. R.]

[3] Thus the clergy received a double portion, in consequence of a perverted and carnal application of the passage in 1 Tim. v. 17 *. Tertullian, after becoming a Montanist, says, in his treatise de Jujuniis, c. xvii. "Ad elogium gulæ tuæ pertinet, quod duplex apud te præsidentibus honos binis partibus deputatur." Comp. Apostol. Constit. lib. ii. c. 28, where that which Tertullian properly blames is prescribed as a law. Clemens, Strom. vii. 759, says of the Gnostic sects, ἡ συμποτικη δια της ψευδωνυμου ἀγαπης πρωτοκλισια.

[4] De Jejuniis, c. xvii. "Apud te agape in cacabis fervet; major est agape, quia per hanc adolescentes tui cum sororibus dormiunt." So passionate an accuser will naturally appear unworthy of credit.

[5] Pædag. ii. 141. [Pott. p. 166. 7. Sylb. p. 61.]

* [This passage has been already adduced on another occasion, p. 191. I must refer to the preface for a few further remarks upon it.—H. J. R.]

the heavenly Church. Love is a pure thing, and worthy of God, and to bestow is one of its deeds; . . . . but these feasts have only a spark of love, which is lighted by earthly food."

We now go to the separate consideration of the Lord's Supper.

We have already observed that the prayer of praise and thanks in the Jewish Passover was transferred to the Christian Supper of the Lord; this prayer of praise and thanksgiving was always looked upon as an essential part of this rite, which hence obtained the name of εὐχαριστια[6]. While the principal minister of the Church [the Gemeindevorsteher, or president,] took up the bread and wine from the table that stood before him, he thanked God in the name of the whole Church, because he had created the things of nature, which were here represented by the most essential means of sustenance, for the sake of man, and that he, the Creator, had, for the sake of man also, allowed his Son to appear and to suffer in the nature of man. Both of these, the thanksgiving for the gifts of nature, and that for the blessings of grace, were closely connected together, for it was only after man was redeemed, when he returned to the condition of a child in regard to his heavenly Father, that he could justly know how all has been given to him by the love of his heavenly Father; all earthly gifts had for Him a higher meaning, as pledges of an eternal love, about to bestow far higher benefits on man. All nature, which had before been desecrated by him, when he was in the service of sin, and stood estranged from God, was now sanctified and given back to him, a redeemed creature; and in the Supper of the Lord, the earthly and the natural became ennobled as the symbols or the bearers of the heavenly and the Divine. A higher

[6] The expression εὐχαριστια is a metonymical one, entirely to be compared with that of St. Paul, ποτηριον εὐλογιας, ὁ εὐλογουμεν, or that of Justin Martyr, ὁ εὐχαριστηθεις ἀρτος και οἰνος, the bread and wine over which the prayer of thanks (the blessing) has been spoken. The latter says expressly, that as soon as the president had uttered the prayer over the bread and wine, and the Church had said amen after it, the supper was distributed. [Apol. i. c. lxxxv.] He mentions no other consecration; he says: την δι' εὐχης λογου του παρ' αὐτου (του Χριστου) εὐχαριστηθεισαν τροφην, which cannot allude to a form of words handed down from Christ himself, for there was nothing of the kind, but only in general to the thanksgiving which was established by him, and which was used at this festival after his example. It is possible that the words containing the institution of the feast, may have been interwoven into this prayer. In the words of Cyprian, Ep. lxxx.: "In vocatione non contemtibili sanctificare panem et eucharistiam facere:" there seems to be a notion conveyed of a consecration, by which common bread became changed to the Supper of our Lord.

and heavenly food for the life of the inward man would now be connected with this earthly food, which had been sanctified by the prayer of thanksgiving, through the power of that same God, who had caused this earthly food to grow for the use of man. (The different representations of the relation between the sign and the thing signified, we here leave untouched.)

This connexion of ideas was a very favourite one among the first Christians, and was often used by them in controverting the contempt of nature shown by the Gnostics. And here also there was an allusion to a peculiar custom observed in the Church at this time; the members of the Church themselves brought the wine and bread as free gifts, and out of these offerings the elements were taken for the Lord's Supper[7]. These gifts were considered as the spiritual sacrifice of thanksgiving of Christians. When the minister took the elements of the Lord's Supper from these gifts, and consecrated them to God with praise and prayer, he represented the whole Church, considered as *one* priestly race, as one in the Lord, and he represented her readiness again to consecrate to the service of God all which she received from God. This Christian sacrifice of thanks was considered as a spiritual sacrifice, which existed only in the heart, and as the free expression of child-like love and thankfulness, and was contrasted with the sacrifice of victims in the Jewish and the heathen service. Partly these gifts of the Christians, partly the thanksgiving prayer of the minister, by which they were consecrated to God, and at last, partly the whole of the Supper of the Lord was considered as an *offering*, and called προσφορα, θυσια, but it was at first only in *this* sense[8]. In this point of view, Justin Martyr says[9], "The

[7] This custom, which may be pretty clearly presumed from the allusions of a Justin Martyr, and of an Irœneus, is expressly stated by Cyprian in his work de Opere et Eleemosynis, where he blames the rich woman for coming to the communion without giving an offering of love for the necessities of the Church. "Locuples et dives es et dominicum celebrare te credis, quæ in dominicum sine sacrificio venis, quæ *partem de sacrificio*, quod pauper obtulit, sumis?"

[8] Hence comes the expression so common in Cyprian, "Oblationem alicujus accipere, offerre;" and to receive these gifts from any one for the Church, to take the elements for the Supper of the Lord from them, and to consecrate them, was a proof that such a person was considered as a regular member of the Church *.

[9] Just. M. Dial. Tryph. Jud. p. 345. [p. 340, ed. Jebb.]

* [The question, how far the Lord's Supper is a proper sacrifice, is by far too wide a field to enter upon in this place. I think, however, that the comparison between the Jewish prayer of benediction and the Christian, is a subject which de-

prayers and thanksgiving, that come from worthy men, are the only true sacrifices, well pleasing to God; for *these alone* have Christians learned to make, and particularly in remembrance of their sustenance, which consists of dry and moist things[1], by which they are also led to remember the sufferings which Christ underwent for their sake." He considers this a proof of the high-priestly character of Christians, because God receives sacrifice only from his priests. In this sense Irenæus[2], while he is contrasting this spiritual sacrifice with every kind of sacrificial worship, speaks thus: "It is not *sacrifices*, which sanctify the man, but the *conscience* of him that offers, if it be pure, sanctifies the offering, and causes God to receive it as from a friend."

Accordingly, the idea of a sacrifice in the Supper of the Lord, was originally entirely of a symbolical kind, and this idea originally had not the least reference to the sacrifice of Christ. It was only the spiritual offering of praise by the Christians, which was thought of, but this certainly presupposed the sacrifice of Christ for man[3]. Afterwards, however, the reference to this latter sacrifice became more prominently brought forward; but still only as implying the symbolical, or the commemorative, represen-

mands a fuller investigation than is here given. Those who consider the Eucharist a proper sacrifice, do not allow this comparison to hold—they contend that Christ had *before* "performed the office of a master at the Paschal feast," and that, *after supper*, when the Paschal meal was over, he blessed the bread and cup as pledges of the new covenant, and that he "did then, under the symbol of bread, offer his body, and under the symbol of wine, pour out his blood;"—offering these symbols to God as typical of his own sacrifice. It is impossible here to do more than to hint at this view of the matter, and to recommend its thorough investigation. The works which take the strongest views in defence of the proper sacrifice, are perhaps Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice, and Hickes on the Christian Priesthood. The words in inverted commas are from the former, Vol. i. p. 178. H. J. R.]

[1] [The bread, wine, and water of the Eucharist. See Jebb's note. H. J. R.]

[2] Iren. iv. 18.

[3] One place of Irenæus seems to contradict what is here advanced, (iv. 18. § 4.) "Verbum quod offertur Deo;" as if the Logos itself, *i. e.* Christ, were offered up to God in the Lord's Supper. But even if there were no other reading in existence, this at any rate cannot be the genuine one—for such an expression would not only plainly contradict the rest of the system of Irenæus, which is clearly declared, but here it would not suit what immediately goes before. He had just said, "Offertur Deo ex creatura ejus," (this relates also to the offering of bread and wine,) and in the preceding chapter, § 6, he says, "per Christum offert ecclesia." Undoubtedly, therefore, the reading of other MSS. must be received as the genuine reading, "*per* quod offertur." It is the constant reference to Christ as the high-priest, which gives the proper consecration, as well to this spiritual offering as to the whole life. This was the meaning of Irenæus.

tation of the sacrifice of Christ. But as one error produces another, the false representation of a particular priesthood in the Christian Church which was to correspond to that of the Old Testament, might occasion the erroneous notion of a sacrificial worship performed by the pretended priest, which should also answer to the sacrifice of the Old Testament; and this false comparison, and this transference of notions from the Old to the New Testament, was the cause that the idea of a sacrifice in the Supper of the Lord, which was originally quite symbolical, received a turn entirely at variance with its real character—a turn which gave it something of a magical character, of which we find traces as early as the time of Cyprian.

The usual sort of bread, which was brought by the members of the Church, was used for the Supper of the Lord. Justin Martyr calls it expressly, "common bread," (κοινος αρτος); those who went on the supposition that Christ celebrated the festival of the Passover a day earlier than usual, had no reason at all to use any thing but the common sort of bread in the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and even those who were of a different opinion, did not think the use of unleavened bread an essential part of the performance of this rite. We find, however, one exception in the case of some Judaizing Christians [4], which arose from the very nature of the case; for as they kept a festival in commemoration of that Last Supper of our Lord, only once a year at the Passover, it naturally happened that, as Christians who were continuing in the observance of the Jewish ceremonial law, they would eat unleavened bread [5]. As among the ancients, and especially in the East, it was not customary to drink pure wine, unmixed with water, at meal times, it was hence supposed that Christ also used wine mixed with water. The taste for higher and mysterious meanings, however, did not content itself with this simple, but apparently too trivial, explanation of this custom, which had become general. The mixture of the water and the wine, was to represent the union of the Church with Christ [6].

Originally, the general celebration of the Supper of the Lord,

[4] Epiphanius (Hæres. xxx. § 16.) says of the Ebionites of his time, that they celebrated the Communion once a year with unleavened bread and water. (The latter was because their ascetic habits would not allow of the use of wine.)

[5] See below, in the remarks on the Ebionites.

[6] "Quando in calice vino aqua miscetur, Christus populo adunatur." Cyprian, Ep. lxiii.

united with the celebration of the love-feast, was a mark of daily Christian communion. When these daily assemblies could no longer take place, the Supper of the Lord became an essential part of the Sunday worship, as it appears in Justin Martyr, and the whole congregation took part in the communion, as they had responded to the preceding prayer by their Amen. The deacons brought the bread and wine to each of the assembly in order. It was held necessary that all the Christians resident in the town should constantly continue in union with the Lord and with his Church, by partaking of this communion; and the deacons, therefore, carried a portion of the consecrated bread and wine to the strangers, the sick, or the prisoners, who were prevented from attending the congregation [7].

But in many Churches, as for instance, in the North African, the daily enjoyment of the communion was held to be necessary, because they looked upon it as the daily bond of union between the Lord and the Church, and the daily means of strengthening, enlivening, and salvation, for Christians. Hence, Tertullian and Cyprian understand the prayer for daily bread in a *spiritual* sense, and apply it to an unbroken and sanctifying union with Christ, by means of the Supper of the Lord. But as the daily service and celebration of the Lord's Supper no longer existed, there was no other means left to accomplish this object, than to take home some of the consecrated bread, which might stand, in case of necessity, instead of the whole communion. (This is the first trace of a reception of the Lord's Supper under *one* kind, which was introduced through error and abuse.) Thus every man, after the morning prayer, before he went to his earthly business, enjoyed the Sacrament with his family in his own house, in order that the life of the whole following day might be sanctified by communion with the Lord. Oh! that men had known

[7] See the passage which we have already quoted from Justin Martyr, and that of Irenæus, in Euseb. v. 24. πεμπειν εὐχαριστιαν τοις ἀπο των παροικιων παρουσιν, where he is speaking of the Romish bishops. It was thus that the custom arose of communicating with elements that had before been consecrated (which were afterwards called προηγιασμενα). The notion, on which this was founded, was that a communion could only have its right meaning in the midst of a community; and hence the communion of an absent individual could therefore only be considered in the light of a continuation of that general communion of the assembled Church, But when Cyprian speaks of the "presbyteri apud confessores offerentes," he probably there means, that the Lord's Supper was consecrated by the priests themselves.

how to distinguish properly the spiritual feast, which was to continue throughout the whole of the Christian's life, from the outward Supper of the Lord, perceptible to the senses[8]! Others, perhaps, set out from the notion, that men ought to partake of the Lord's Supper only after a whole course of particular preparation of the inward man, and therefore only at stated seasons, chosen according to the particular convenience of the individual. The learned Hippolytus, who lived in the first half of the third century, wrote, even in those days, a treatise on the question—Whether a man ought to communicate daily, or at stated seasons[9]?

As it was in the North African Church that the necessity of infant baptism was first peculiarly insisted on, so also did they join with this notion that of *infant communion;* for as men did not distinguish the sign and the Divine thing signified by it sufficiently from one another, and as they understood all that is said of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, in John vi. of the outward participation of the Lord's Supper, this sacrament, they concluded, must be entirely necessary for the attainment of salvation from the very first[1].

The celebration of the Lord's Supper was the seal of *every consecration to a religious purpose;* it was used at the *conclusion*

[8] The following passages refer to this custom: Tertullian, (ad Uxor. ii. 5.) in speaking of the jealousy of a heathen husband towards a Christian wife: "Non sciet maritus, quid secreto ante omnem cibum gustes? Et si sciverit panem, non illum credit esse, qui dicitur." And also, in the parts of the treatise de Oratione first published by Muratori, c. xix. "Accepto corpore Domini et reservato (by the Christian mistress of a family) arca sua, in qua Domini sanctum fuit." Cyprian, de Lapsis, ed. Baluz. p. 189. [p. 132, ed. Ox. *] In the book de Spectaculis, ascribed to Cyprian, he says of a man who runs from church to the theatre, "Festinans ad spectaculum, dimissus e dominico et adhuc gerens secum, ut assolet, Eucharistiam."

[9] See Jerome, Ep. lxxi. ad Lucin. [This is Ep. xxviii. in the Edition of Victorius. Paris. 1579. tom. i. p. 247, d. H. J. R.]

[1] Thus it happened that they gave only wine to children who could not eat bread. Comp. Cyprian, de Lapsis. This is another example of the manner in which a superstitious abuse, contrary to the institution itself, led men to separate the elements of the sacrament, and communicate under one kind. [There is a very elaborate Treatise by Zornius on the subject of the *Eucharist of* Infants. The title is "Petri Zornii Historia Eucharistiæ Infantium, &c." Berolini, 1736. See also Bingham, Antiq. xii. 4. 7. xv. 7. 4. H. J. R.]

[* I suppose there is some misprint in this note. The Latin words *before* the parenthesis are from Tertullian, those *after*, are from Cyprian. They are undivided in both editions of Dr. Neander. Possibly, however, (as the words in Cyprian are "arcam suam," &c.) Dr. Neander has intended to join the two quotations, and complete the sense by putting "arca sua" in the ablative case. H. J. R.]

of a marriage[2], as well as at the *service for the commemoration* of the dead. We shall take a somewhat nearer view of the latter of these rites.

Christianity did not *annihilate* the *natural feelings* of man, but only *ennobled* them; it was as much opposed, on the one hand, to a *corrupted civilization*, that would overwhelm natural feelings, as, on the other, to a *wild, unbridled indulgence* of them in a rude state of nature; and thus also it showed the same character in regard to *mourning* for the *dead*. From the very beginning, Christianity condemned the wild and often hypocritical expressions of grief, by which funeral processions were accompanied, and it protested against the shrieks of the hired women called "præficæ;" and yet it required no cold stoical resignation and apathy, but only softened and ennobled the bitterness of lamentation by the spirit of faith and hope, and of a child-like acquiescence in the dealings of eternal love, a love which takes away—only to give again in greater splendour and reality; which divides—only to unite again those whom it has divided, in a glorified state for all eternity. When multitudes were carried away by a desolating pestilence at Carthage, Cyprian said to his Church: "Our brethren are not to be lamented, who are freed from the world by the call of the Lord; surely we know that they are not lost, but sent before us,—that they have taken their departure from us in order to precede us. We may *long for them*, as we do for those who are absent from us on a voyage, but we may not lament them; we may not here below clothe ourselves in the *black* garments of mourning, while *they* are already clothed in the *white* garb of glory above; we must not give occasion to the heathen to reproach us with our inconsistency, because we lament those as annihilated and lost, whom we declare to be *living with God;* and because we do not prove by the witness of our hearts the faith which we profess with our lips. . . . . We who live in hope, we who believe in God and trust that Christ suffered for us and rose again, we who *abide in Christ*, and rise again by Him and in Him, why should we *ourselves* be unwilling to depart from out of the world, or why should we lament and sorrow for *those among us who are departed?* Christ Himself, our Lord and God, exhorts us, and He says: 'I am the resurrection and the life; whoso-

[2] "Oblatio pro matrimonio." On the meaning of this word "oblatio," see above.

ever believeth in me, though he die, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die!' . . . . . Why hasten we not to see our country, to salute our parents? There a vast multitude of them that are dear to us, await our arrival, a multitude of parents, brethren, and children, who are now secure of their own salvation, and anxious only about ours. What a mutual joy will it be for them and us, when we come into their presence and receive their embrace[3]!" From this turn of mind the Christian custom arose, that the remembrance of the dead should be celebrated on the *anniversary of their death* by their relations, husband or wife, in a manner suited to the nature of the Christian faith and hope. The *Supper of the Lord* was celebrated on this day[4], in the consciousness of an inseparable communion with those who had died in the Lord; a gift was brought to the altar in their name, as if they were still living members of the Church; and it was hence, probably, that the prayer for peace to the souls of the departed was interwoven with the prayer of the Church, preceding the communion[5].

But even this custom, which really proceeded from a *pure Christian feeling*, received a *false, unevangelic turn*, from its connexion with that *false notion of a sacrifice* in the Supper of the Lord. It was fancied that the magical efficacy of the celebration of that sacrifice would conduce to the advantage of the departed person, although it really entirely depends on the *dispositions* which each man gives proof of in his life, whether that sacrifice of Christ shall be a source of salvation to him individually or not; although the efficacy of that sacrifice of Christ can be appropriated to no man by the instrumentality of others, unless he has appropriated it to himself by his own lively faith,—and in this case, no man can impart more to him, than he himself has received from his life of faith. The germ of this false view of things is to be discerned as early as the time of Cyprian.

[3] Cyprian, de Mortalitate, (sub finem).

[4] [In the Books of Common Prayer, published during the first years of Queen Elizabeth, there was a separate office for the administration of the Sacrament at funerals. It is given in Sparrow's Collection of Articles, Injunctions, &c. p. 199. It is in Latin; its date is 1560. It is found in some English editions also. H. J. R.]

[5] "Oblationes pro defunctis annua die facimus." Tertullian, de Corona Mil. c. iii. where it is spoken of as an old tradition. He also says to a husband, in regard to his deceased wife: "Pro cujus spiritu postulas, pro qua oblationes annuas reddis: commendabis per sacerdotem," &c. De Exhortat. Castitat. c. xi.

As *individual Christians and Christian families* celebrated in this manner the remembrance of their near relations, *whole Churches* also celebrated the remembrance of *those* who had died in the midst of them as witnesses of the faith: the day of their death was looked upon as their birth-day—the day of their birth into a glorified existence[6]. The remains of their bodies were carefully buried, as the holy organs of holy souls, which should hereafter come again into their service, when called into another more glorious form. There was a congregation formed round their graves on the anniversary of their *birth-day*, (in the sense mentioned above,) and the story of their confession of the faith and of their sufferings was told, the Lord's Supper was celebrated, in the conviction of a continued communion with them in union with Him, of whom they had given witness by their death[7]. The pure Christian character of the commemorative festival is shown by the manner in which the *Church of Smyrna*, in their account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, their bishop, answered the reproach of the heathens, who were unwilling to give up to the Church the remains of the martyr, in order that the Christians might not forsake their crucified Redeemer, and begin to worship the martyr. The Church writes thus: "Ye know not that we can neither forsake that Christ, who suffered for the salvation of the whole world of the redeemed, nor can we worship any other. We pray to Him, but we love the martyrs, as they deserve, for their exceeding love to their King and Master; and as we also hope to become their companions and fellow-disciples." The Church then continues: "We take up his bones, which are more precious to us than gold and precious stones, and we lay them down in a becoming place; and God will grant that we may gather together there in peace and joy, and celebrate the birth-day of his martyrdom, in remembrance of the departed warrior, and for the practice and exercise of those whom the battle still awaits." We cannot, however, deny, that in the time of Cyprian, and even earlier (for Tertullian, as a Montanist,

[6] The "dies natales, natalitia martyrum," γενεθλια των μαρτυρων.

[7] These "oblationes, sacrificia pro martyribus," originally presumed that the martyrs were like other sinful men, who might well need the Christian intercession; in its original intention, therefore, this custom was in contradiction with the extravagant reverence paid to martyrs; and hence it was afterwards found necessary to give a new meaning to this old custom.

had already combated this error), the seeds of an exaggerated honour to the martyrs, which had consequences prejudicial to the purity of Christianity, showed themselves. So inclined is man universally to *overvalue what is human, and to idolize the instrument*, which ought only to direct his heart *to Him*, who works by means of that instrument.

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